

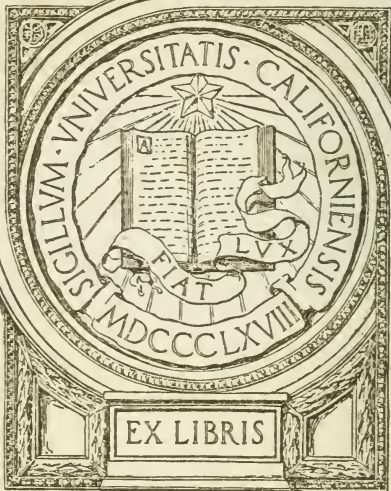
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ELEGANT EPISTLES

FROM THE
MOST EMINENT
WRITERS;

BOOK 1ST PART 1ST

ANCIENT AND CLASSICAL.



CHITRO

LONDON.

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ELEGANT EPISTLES:

BEING A

COPIOUS SELECTION

OF

INSTRUCTIVE, MORAL, AND ENTERTAINING

LETTERS,

FROM THE MOST EMINENT

EPISTOLARY WRITERS.

VOLUME I.

BOOK I. II.

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CONTENTS

OF

BOOK I. PART I.

Letter	Page
1. To Terentia, my dearest Tullia, and my Son	1
2. To the same	5
3. To the same	8
4. To Terentia	12
5. To Publius Lentulus, Proconsul.....	15
6. To the same	16
7. To Lucius Luceius	18
8. To Marcus Marius	26
9. To Marcus Licinius Crassus.....	32
10. To Julius Cæsar	35
11. To Trebatius	38
12. To the same	39
13. To the same	40
14. To the same	41
15. To the same	44
16. To the same	45
17. To Quintus Philippus, Proconsul	48
18. To Lucius Valerius, the Lawyer	49
19. To Caius Curio	50
20. To Trebatius	52
21. To the same	54
22. To Caius Curio	55
23. To Trebatius.....	56
24. To the same	58
25. To Caius Curio.....	60
26. To the same	62
27. To Trebatius	63
28. To Titus Fabius	64
29. To Volumnius	66
30. To Terentia and Tullia	68
31. To Tiro	70
32. To the same	72
33. To the same	73
34. To the same	76

CONTENTS.

Letter	Page
25. To Terentia and Tullia	78
26. To Terentia	80
37. To the same	81
38. To the same	82
39. To the same	83
40. To the same	83
41. To the same	84
42. To the same	85
43. To the same	86
44. To the same	86
45. To Titirus	86
46. To Terentia	90
47. To the same	90
48. To the same	91
49. To the same	92
50. To the same	92
51. To the same	93
52. To the same	93
53. To the same	94
54. To the same	94
55. To Thebonius.....	95
56. To Lucius Mescinius	98
57. To Varro.....	101
58. To the same	103
59. To the same	106
60. To Volumnius	110
61. To Papirus Pætus.....	112
62. To Cæsar	115
63. To the same	117
64. Quintus Cicero to Marcus Cicero	119
65. To Dolabella	120
66. Servius Sulpicius to Cicero	121
67. To Servius Sulpicius	126
68. To Lucius Luceius	129
69. Luceius to Cicero	132
70. To Lucius Luceius	133
71. To Martius	135
72. Martius to Cicero.....	140

CONTENTS

OF

BOOK I. PART II.

Letter	Page
1. To Septitius	145
2. To Caninius Rufus	146
3. To Pompeia Celerina	147
4. To Cornelius Tacitus	148
5. To Mincius Fundanus.....	149
6. To Atrius Clemens	151
7. To Calestrius Tiro	153
8. To Junius Mauricus.....	157
9. To Septitius Clarus	159
10. To Cornelius Tacitus	161
11. To Bebius	168
12. To Voconius Romanus.....	169
13. To Priscus	173
14. To Gallus.....	175
15. To Mauricus	184
16. To Cerealis.....	185
17. To Calvisius	188
18. To Hispula	191
19. To Macer.....	193
20. To Severus	198
21. To Catilius	199
22. To Nepos.....	200
23. To Tabatus	203
24. To Antoninus.....	205
25. To Naso	206
26. To Cornelius Tacitus	207
27. To Valerius Paulinus	209
28. To Gallus	210
29. To Hispula	213
30. To Velius Cerealis	214
31. To Valens	215
32. To Licinius	217

feel my misfortunes with a particular sensibility upon those tender occasions.

Oh! that I had been more indifferent to life! Our days would then have been, if not wholly, unacquainted with sorrow, yet by no means thus wretched. However, if any hopes are still reserved to us of recovering some part at least of what we have lost, I shall not think that I have made altogether so imprudent a choice. But if our present fate is unalterably fixed—Ah! my dearest Terentia, if we are utterly and for ever abandoned by those gods whom you have so religiously adored, and by those men whom I have so faithfully served; let me see you as soon as possible, that I may have the satisfaction of breathing out my last departing sigh in your arms.

I have spent about a fortnight at this place, with my friend Marcus Flaccus. This worthy man did not scruple to exercise the rites of friendship and hospitality towards me, notwithstanding the severe penalties of that iniquitous law against those who should venture to give me reception*. May I one day have it in my power to make him a return to those generous services, which I shall ever most gratefully remember!

I am just going to embark, and purpose to pass through Macedonia in my way to Cyzicum†. And

* As soon as Cicero had withdrawn from Rome, Clodius procured a law, which, among other articles, enacted that "no person should presume to harbour or receive him, on pain of death."

† A considerable town in an island of the Propontis, which lays so close to the continent of Asia, as to be joined with it by a bridge,

now, my Terentia, thus wretched and ruined as I am, can I entreat you, under all that weight of pain and sorrow, with which, I too well know, you are oppressed, can I entreat you to be the partner and companion of my exile? But must I then live without you? I know not how to reconcile myself to that hard condition; unless your presence at Rome may be a mean of forwarding my return; if any hopes of that kind should indeed subsist. But should there, as I sadly suspect, be absolutely none, come to me, I conjure you, if it be possible; for never can I think myself completely ruined, whilst I shall enjoy my Terentia's company. But how will my dearest daughter dispose of herself? A question which you yourselves must consider: for, as to my own part, I am utterly at a loss what to advise. At all events, however, that dear unhappy girl must not take any measures that may injure her conjugal repose*, or affect her in the good opinion of the world. As for my son—let me not at least be deprived of the consolation of folding him for ever in my arms. But I must lay down my pen a few moments: my tears flow too fast to suffer me to proceed.

I am under the utmost solicitude, as I know not whether you have been able to preserve any part of your estate, or (what I sadly fear) are cruelly robbed of your whole fortune. I hope Piso† will always continue, what you represent him to be,

* Tullia was at this time married to Caius Piso Frugi; a young nobleman of one of the best families in Rome.

† Cicero's son-in-law, mentioned in the last note.

entirely ours. As to the manumission of the slaves, I think you have no occasion to be uneasy. For, with regard to your own, you only promised them their liberty, as they should deserve it; but, excepting Orpheus, there are none of them that have any great claim to this favour. As to mine, I told them, if my estate should be forfeited, I would give them their freedom, provided I could obtain the confirmation of that grant; but if I preserved my estate, that they should all of them, excepting only a few whom I particularly named, remain in their present condition. But this is a matter of little consequence.

With regard to the advice you give me, of keeping up my spirits, in the belief that I shall again be restored to my country, I only wish that I may have reason to encourage so desirable an expectation. In the mean time, I am greatly miserable, in the uncertainty when I shall hear from you, or what hand you will find to convey your letters. I would have waited for them at this place; but the master of the ship on which I am going to embark, could not be prevailed upon to lose the present opportunity of sailing.

For the rest, let me conjure you in my turn, to bear up under the pressure of our afflictions with as much resolution as possible. Remember, that my days have all been honourable; and that I now suffer, not for my crimes, but my virtues. No, my Terentia, nothing can justly be imputed to me, but that I survived the loss of my dignities. However, if it was more agreeable to our children that I should thus live, let that reflection teach us to submit to our misfortunes with cheerfulness;

insupportable as upon all other considerations they would undoubtedly be. But, alas, whilst I am endeavouring to keep up your spirits, I am utterly unable to preserve my own !

I have sent back the faithful Philetærus, as the weakness of his eyes made him incapable of rendering me any service. Nothing can equal the good offices I receive from Sallustius. Prescennius, likewise, has given me strong marks of his affection ; and I hope he will not fail in his respect also to you. Sica promised to attend me in my exile, but he changed his mind, and has left me at this place.

I entreat you to take all possible care of your health, and be assured, your misfortunes more sensibly affect me than my own. Adieu, my Terentia, thou most faithful and best of wives ! adieu. And thou, my dearest daughter, together with that other consolation of my life, my dear son, I bid you most tenderly farewell.

LETTER II.

[A. U. 695.]

TO TERENCE, MY DEAREST TULLIA, AND MY SON.

IMAGINE not, my Terentia, that I write longer letters to others than to yourself : be assured, at least, if ever I do, it is merely because those I receive from them require a more particular answer. The truth of it is, I am always at a loss what to write ; and as there is nothing in the present dejection of my mind, that I perform with

greater reluctance in general ; so I never attempt it with regard to you and my dearest daughter, that it does not cost me a flood of tears. For how can I think of you without being pierced with grief, in the reflection, that I have made those completely miserable whom I ought, and wished, to have rendered perfectly happy ? And I should have rendered them so, if I had acted with less timidity.

Piso's behaviour towards us in this season of our afflictions, has greatly endeared him to my heart ; and I have, as well as I was able in the present discomposure of my mind, both acknowledged his good offices, and exhorted him to continue them.

I perceive you depend much upon the new tribunes ; and if Pompey perseveres in his present disposition, I am inclined to think that your hopes will not be disappointed ; though, I must confess, I have some fears with respect to Crassus. In the meanwhile, I have the satisfaction to find, what, indeed, I had reason to expect, that you act with great spirit and tenderness in all my concerns. But I lament it should be my cruel fate to expose you to so many calamities, whilst you are thus generously endeavouring to ease the weight of mine. Be assured, it was with the utmost grief I read the account which Publius sent me, of the opprobrious manner in which you were dragged from the temple of Vesta to the office of Valerius*. Sad reverse indeed ! that

* Terentia had taken sanctuary in the temple of Vesta, but was forcibly dragged out from thence by the directions of Clodius, in order to be examined at a public office, concerning her husband's effects.

thou, the dearest object of my fondest desires, that my Terentia, to whom such numbers were wont to look up for relief, should be, herself, a spectacle of the most affecting distress! and that I, who have saved so many others from ruin, should have ruined both myself and my family by my own indiscretion!

As to what you mention with regard to the area belonging to my house, I shall never look upon myself as restored to my country, till that spot of ground is again in my possession*. But this is a point that does not depend upon ourselves. Let me rather express my concern for what does, and lament that, distressed as your circumstances already are, you should engage yourself in a share of those expenses which are incurred upon my account. Be assured, if ever I should return to Rome, I shall easily recover my estate; but should fortune continue to persecute me, will you, thou dear unhappy woman, will you fondly throw away, in gaining friends to a desperate cause, the last scanty remains of your broken fortunes! I conjure you then, my dearest Terentia, not to involve yourself in any charges of that kind: let them be borne by those who are able, if they are willing, to support the weight. In a word, if you have any affection for me, let not your anxiety upon my account injure your health; which, alas! is already but too much impaired. Believe me, you

* After Clodius had procured the law against Cicero already taken notice of, he consecrated the area where his house in Rome stood, to the perpetual service of religion, and erected a temple upon it to the goddess of Liberty.

are the perpetual subject of my waking and sleeping thoughts: and as I know the assiduity you exert in my behalf, I have a thousand fears lest your strength should not be equal to so continued a fatigue. I am sensible, at the same time, that my affairs depend entirely upon your assistance: and therefore, that they may be attended with the success you hope and so zealously endeavour to obtain, let me earnestly entreat you to take care of your health.

I know not whom to write to, unless to those who first write to me, or whom you particularly mention in your letters. As you and Tullia are of opinion that I should not retreat farther from Italy, I have laid aside that design. Let me hear from you both as often as possible, particularly if there should be any fairer prospect of my return. Farewel, ye dearest objects of my most tender affection, farewel!

Thessalonica, Oct. the 5th.*

LETTER III.

[A. U. 695.]

TO TERENCE, MY DEAREST TULLIA, AND MY SON.

I LEARN, by the letters of several of my friends, as well as from general report, that you discover the greatest fortitude of mind, and that you solicit my affairs with unwearied application. Oh, my Terentia, how truly wretched am I, to be the

* A city in Macedonia, now called *Salonichi*.

occasion of such severe misfortunes to so faithful, so generous, and so excellent a woman ! And my dearest Tullia too !—that she, who was once so happy in her father, should now derive from him such bitter sorrows ! But how shall I express the anguish I feel for my little boy ! who became acquainted with grief as soon as he was capable of any reflection*. Had these afflictions happened, as you tenderly represent them, by an unavoidable fate, they would have sat less heavy on my heart. But they are altogether owing to my own folly, in imagining I was loved where I was secretly envied†, and in not joining with those who were sincerely desirous of my friendship‡. Had I been governed, indeed, by my own sentiments, without relying so much on those of my weak or wicked advisers, we might still, my Terentia, have been happy. However, since my friends encourage me to hope, I will endeavour to restrain my grief, lest the effect it may have upon my health should disappoint your tender efforts for

* Cicero's son was at this time about eight years of age.

† The persons to whom he alludes are, Hortensius, Arrius, and others of that party, who (if we may believe Cicero's complaints to Atticus) took advantage of his fears, and advised him to withdraw from Rome on purpose to ruin him. But persons under misfortunes are apt to be suspicious, and are frequently therefore unjust: as Cicero seems to have been with respect to Hortensius at least, who does not appear to have merited his reproaches.

‡ Cæsar and Crassus frequently solicited Cicero to unite himself to their party, promising to protect him from the outrages of Clodius, provided he would fall in with their measures.

my restoration. I am sensible, at the same time, of the many difficulties that must be conquered ere that point can be effected : and that it would have been much easier to have maintained my post, than it is to recover it. Nevertheless, if all the tribunes are in my interest ; if Lentulus is really as zealous in my cause as he appears ; and if Pompey and Cæsar likewise concur with him in the same views, I ought not, most certainly, to despair.

With regard to our slaves, I am willing to act as our friends, you tell me, advise. As to your concern in respect to the plague which broke out here, it is entirely ceased ; and I had the good fortune to escape all infection. However, it was my desire to have changed my present situation for some more retired place in Epirus, where I might be secure from Piso and his soldiers*. But the obliging Plancius was unwilling to part with me ; and still indeed detains me here, in the hope that we may return together to Rome†. If ever I should live to see that happy day ; if ever I should be restored to my Terentia, to my children, and to myself, I shall think all the tender

* Lucius Calphurnius Piso, who was consul this year with Gabinus : they were both the professed enemies of Cicero, and supported Clodius in his violent measures. The province of Macedonia had fallen to the former, and he was now preparing to set out for his government, where his troops were daily arriving.

† Plancius was, at this time, quæstor in Macedonia, and distinguished himself by many generous offices to Cicero in his exile.

solicitudes we have suffered, during this sad separation, abundantly repaid.

Nothing can exceed the affection and humanity of Piso's* behaviour towards every one of us : and I wish he may receive from it as much satisfaction, as, I am persuaded, he will honour.—I was far from intending to blame you with respect to my brother : but it is much my desire, especially as there are so few of you, that you should live together in the most perfect harmony.—I have made my acknowledgments where you desired, and acquainted the persons you mention, that you had informed me of their services.

As to the estate you propose to sell ; alas ! my dear Terentia, think well of the consequence : think what would become of our unhappy boy, should fortune still continue to persecute us. But my eyes stream too fast to suffer me to add more : nor would I draw the same tender flood from yours. I will only say, that if my friends should not desert me, I shall be in no distress for money : and if they should, the money you can raise by the sale of this estate will little avail. I conjure you then, by all our misfortunes, let us not absolutely ruin our poor boy, who is well-nigh totally undone already. If we can but raise him above indigence, a moderate share of good fortune and merit will be sufficient to open his way to whatever else we can wish him to obtain. Take care of your health, and let me know by an express how your negotiations proceed, and how affairs in general stand. My fate must now be soon determined. I ten-

* Cicero's son-in-law.

derly salute my son and daughter, and bid you all farewel.

*Dyrrachium**, November 26.

P.S. I came hither, not only as it is a free city† and much in my interest, but as it is situated, likewise, near Italy. But if I should find any inconvenience from its being a town of such great resort, I shall remove elsewhere, and give you due notice.

LETTER IV.

[A. U. 695.]

TO TERENTIA.

I RECEIVED three letters from you by the hands of Aristocritus, and have wept over them till they are almost defaced with my tears. Ah! my Terentia, I am worn out with grief: nor do my own personal misfortunes more severely torture my mind, than those with which you and my children are oppressed. Unhappy indeed, as you are, I am still infinitely more so; as our common afflictions are attended with this aggravating circumstance to myself, that they are justly to be im-

* A city in Macedonia, now called *Durazzo*, in the Turkish dominions. This letter, though dated from Dyrrachium, appears to have been wholly written, except the postscript, at Thessalonica.

† That is, a city which had the privilege, though in the dominions of the Roman republic, to be governed by its own laws.

puted to my imprudence alone. I ought, most undoubtedly, either to have avoided the danger by accepting the commission which was offered me; or to have repelled force by force, or bravely to have perished in the attempt. Whereas nothing could have been more unworthy of my character, or more pregnant with misery, than the scheme I have pursued. I am overwhelmed, therefore, not only with sorrow, but with shame; yes, my Terentia, I blush to reflect that I did not exert that spirit I ought for the sake of so excellent a wife and such amiable children. The distress in which you are all equally involved, and your own ill state of health in particular, are ever in my thoughts; as I have the mortification, at the same time, to observe, that there appear but slender hopes of my being recalled. My enemies are many; while those who are jealous of me are almost innumerable; and though they found great difficulty in driving me from my country, it will be extremely easy for them to prevent my return. However, as long as you have any hopes that my restoration may be effected, I will not cease to co-operate with your endeavours for that purpose; lest my weakness should seem, upon all occasions, to frustrate every measure in my favour. In the meanwhile, my person (for which you are so tenderly concerned) is secure from all danger: as, in truth, I am so completely wretched, that even my enemies themselves must wish, in mere malice, to preserve my life. Nevertheless, I shall not fail to observe the caution you kindly give me.

I have sent my acknowledgments by Dexippus to the persons you desired me, and mentioned, at

the same time, that you had informed me of their good offices. I am perfectly sensible of those which Piso exerts towards us with so uncommon a zeal; and, indeed, it is a circumstance which all the world speaks of to his honour. Heaven grant I may live to enjoy, with you and our children, the common happiness of so valuable a relation*!

The only hope I have now left, arises from the new tribunes; and that, too, depends upon the steps they shall take in the commencement of their office: for if they should postpone my affair, I shall give up all expectations of its ever being effected. Accordingly I have dispatched Aristocritus, that you may send me immediate notice of the first measures they shall pursue, together with the general plan upon which they propose to conduct themselves. I have likewise ordered Dexippus to return to me with all expedition, and have written to my brother to request he would give me frequent information in what manner affairs proceed. It is with a view of receiving the earliest intelligence from Rome, that I continue at Dyrrachium: a place where I can remain in perfect security, as I have, upon all occasions,

* He had the great misfortune to be disappointed of this wish: for Piso died soon after this letter was written. Cicero mentions him in several parts of his writings, with the highest gratitude and esteem. He represents him as a young nobleman of the greatest talents and application, who devoted his whole time to the improvement of his mind, and the exercise of eloquence: as one whose moral qualifications were no less extraordinary than his intellectual, and, in short, as possessed of every accomplishment and every virtue that could endear him to his friends, to his family, and to the public.

distinguished this city by my particular patronage. However, as soon as I shall receive intimation that my enemies* are approaching, it is my resolution to retire into Epirus.

In answer to your tender proposal of accompanying me in my exile, I rather choose you should continue in Rome ; as I am sensible it is upon you that the principal burthen of my affairs must rest. If your generous negotiations should succeed, my return will prevent the necessity of that journey : if otherwise——But I need not add the rest. The next letter I shall receive from you, or at most the subsequent one, will determine me in what manner to act. In the mean time, I desire you would give me a full and faithful information how things go on : though, indeed, I have now more reason to expect the final result of this affair, than an account of its progress.

Take care of your health, I conjure you ; assuring yourself, that you are, as you ever have been, the object of my fondest wishes. Farewel, my dear Terentia ! I see you so strongly before me whilst I am writing, that I am utterly spent with the tears I have shed. Once more, farewel.

Dyrrachium, Nov. 30.

LETTER V.

[A. U. 697.]

TO PUBLIUS LENTULUS, PROCONSUL:

AULUS Trebonius, who is an old intimate friend of mine, has some important affairs in your pro-

* The troops of Piso.

vince, which require immediate despatch. His own illustrious character, together with the recommendations of myself and others, have, upon former occasions of this kind, obtained for him the indulgence of your predecessors. He is strongly persuaded, therefore, from that affection and those mutual good offices which subsist between you and me, that this letter will not prove a less effectual solicitor in his behalf; and let me earnestly entreat you not to disappoint him in this his expectation. Accordingly I recommend his servants, his freed-men, his agents, and, in short, his concerns of every kind, to your patronage: but, particularly, I beg you would confirm the decree which Titus Ampius* passed in his favour. In one word, I hope you will take all opportunities of convincing him, that you do not consider this recommendation as a matter of common and unmeaning form. Farewel.

LETTER VI.

[A. U. 697.]

TO PUBLIUS LENTULUS, PROCONSUL.

You will receive a full account from Pollio of all that has been transacted in your affair: as he was not only present, but a principal manager. Believe me, I am much concerned at the unfavourable aspect of this business. However, it affords

* The predecessor of Lentulus in this government.

me a very sensible consolation, that there is strong reason to hope the prudence of your friends will be able to elude the force of those iniquitous schemes, which have been projected to your prejudice. Even time itself will, probably, contribute to this end: as it often wears out the malevolence of those who, either professedly or in a disguised manner, mean one ill. I am yet farther confirmed in these pleasing hopes, whenever I reflect upon the faction that was formerly raised against myself; of which I see a very lively image in the present opposition to you. In the latter instance, indeed, the attack is by no means so extensive or so dangerous, as that which was made upon me; nevertheless, there is, in general, a strong similitude between the two cases: and you must pardon me, if I cannot fear, upon your account, what you never thought reasonable to be apprehensive of on mine. But whatever may be the event, convince the world that you are influenced by those principles for which I have admired you from your earliest youth: and believe me, my friends, the malice of your enemies will only serve to render your character so much the more illustrious. In the mean time, do me the justice to hope, from my affection, whatever the warmest friendship can effect; and be assured, I shall not disappoint your expectations. Farewel.

LETTER VII.

[A. U. 697.]

TO LUCIUS LUCCEIUS.

I HAVE frequently had it in my intentions to talk with you upon the subject of this letter; but a certain awkward modesty has always restrained me from proposing in person, what I can, with less scruple, request at this distance: for a letter, you know, spares the confusion of a blush. I will own then, that I have a very strong, and, I trust, a very pardonable passion of being celebrated in your writings: and though you have more than once given me assurance of your intending me that honour, yet, I hope you will excuse my impatience of seeing your design executed. I had always, indeed, conceived an high expectation of your performances in this kind: but the specimen I have lately seen of them, is so far superior to all I had figured in my imagination, that it has fired me with the most ardent desire of being immediately distinguished in your glorious annals. It is my ambition, I confess, not only to live for ever in the praises of future ages, but to have the present satisfaction, likewise, of seeing myself stand approved in the authoritative records of my ingenious friend. I am sensible, at the same time, that your thoughts are already deeply engaged in the prosecution of your original design. But, as I perceive you have almost completed your account of the Italic and Marian civil wars, and remember

you proposed to carry on the remainder of our history in a regular series ; I cannot forbear recommending it to your consideration, whether it would be best to weave the relation of Cataline's conspiracy into the general texture of your performance, or cast it into a distinct work. It is certain, several of the Greek historians will justify you in this latter method. Thus Callisthenes wrote a narrative of the siege of Troy, as both Timæus and Polybius did of the Pyrrhic and Numantine wars, in so many detached pieces from their larger histories. As to the honour that will arise to me, it will be much the same, I must own, upon whichever scheme you may determine to proceed : but I shall receive so much the earlier gratification of my wishes, if, instead of waiting till you regularly advance to that period of our annals, you should enter upon it by this method of anticipation. Besides, by keeping your mind attentive to one principal scene and character, you will treat your subject, I am persuaded, so much the more in detail, as well as embellish it with higher graces. I must acknowledge, it is not extremely modest, thus to impose a task upon you which your occupations may well justify you in refusing ; and then, to add a further request, that you would honour my actions with your applause : an honour, after all, which you may not think, perhaps, they greatly deserve. However, when a man has once transgressed the bounds of decency, it is in vain to recede ; and his wisest way is to push on boldly in the same confident course, to the end of his purpose. I will venture, then, earnestly to entreat you, not to confine your-

self to the strict laws of history, but to give a greater latitude to your encomiums, than, possibly, you may think my actions can claim. I remember, indeed, you declared, in one of your very elegant prefaces, that you are as inflexible to all the pleas of affection, as Xenophon represents Hercules to have been to those of pleasure*. Let me hope, nevertheless, if friendship should too strongly recommend my actions to your approbation, you will not reject her generous partiality; but give somewhat more to affection, than rigorous truth, perhaps, can justly demand.

If I should prevail upon you to fall in with my proposal, you will find the subject, I persuade myself, not unworthy of your genius and your eloquence. The entire period from the rise of Cataline's conspiracy to my return from banishment, will furnish, I should imagine, a moderate volume. It will supply you likewise with a noble occasion of displaying your judgment in politics, by laying open the source of those civil disorders, and pointing out their proper remedies, as well as by giving your reasons for approving or condemning the several transactions which you relate. And should you be disposed to indulge your usual spirit of freedom, you will have an opportunity of point-

* The story to which Cicero here alludes, is this: Hercules, when he was yet a youth, as Prodicus relates the fable, retired into a place of undisturbed solitude, in order to determine, with himself, what course of life he should pursue. Whilst he was in the midst of his contemplations, Pleasure and Virtue appeared to him under the figures of two beautiful women, and each accosted him in her turn. He heard their respective pleas with great attention: but Virtue gained her cause, and entirely won the heart of the future hero.

ing out, at the same time, with all the severity of your indignation, the treachery and perfidiousness of those who laid their ungenerous snares for my destruction. I will add too, that this period of my life will furnish you with numberless incidents, which cannot but draw the reader's attention in a very agreeable manner : as nothing is more amusing to the mind than to contemplate the various vicissitudes of fortune. And though they were far, it is true, from being acceptable in experience, they cannot fail of giving me much entertainment in description : as there is an inexpressible satisfaction in reflecting, at one's ease, on distresses we have formerly suffered. There is something likewise in that compassion, which arises from reading an account of the misfortunes which have attended others, that casts a most agreeable melancholy upon the mind. Who can peruse the relation of the last moments of Epaminondas at the battle of Mantinea, without finding himself touched with a pleasing commiseration ? That glorious chief, you may remember, would not suffer the dart to be drawn out of his side, till he was informed that his shield was safe from the hands of his enemies : and all his concern amidst the anguish of his wound was, to die with glory*. What can be more interesting, also, than the account of the flight and death of Themis-

* Epaminondas headed the forces of the Thebans in a battle which they fought with the Lacedemonians at Mantinea, a town in Arcadia. The Thebans gained the victory, but lost their invaluable commander : whose death was attended with the circumstances which Cicero here mentions.

tocles !* The truth of it is, a mere narrative of general facts affords little more entertainment to the reader, than he might find in perusing one of our public registers. Whereas, in the history of any extraordinary person, our fear and hope, our joy and sorrow, our astonishment and expectation, are each of them engaged by turns. And if the final result of all should be concluded with some remarkable catastrophe, the mind of the reader is filled with the highest possible gratification. For these reasons I am the more desirous of persuading you to separate my story from the general thread of your narration, and work it up into a detached performance ; as, indeed, it will exhibit a great variety of the most interesting and affecting scenes.

When I tell you it is my ambition to be celebrated by your pen, I am, by no means, apprehensive you will suspect me of flattery. The consciousness of your merit must always incline you to believe, it is envy alone that can be silent in your praise : as, on the other side, you cannot imagine me so weak as to desire to be transmitted to posterity by any hand, which could not secure to itself the same glory it bestowed. When Alexander chose to have his picture drawn by Apelles, and his statue formed by Lysippus, it was not in

* Themistocles, after having distinguished himself among his countrymen, the Athenians, by his military virtues, particularly in the wars in which they were engaged with Xerxes, had rendered himself so popular, that it was thought necessary to remove him : and accordingly he was obliged to withdraw from Athens.

order to ingratiate himself with those distinguished artists: it was from a firm persuasion that the works of these admired geniuses would do equal credit both to his reputation and their own. The utmost, however, that their art could perform, was to perpetuate the persons only of their celebrated contemporaries: but merit needs not any such visible exhibitions to immortalize its fame. Accordingly, the Spartan Agesilaus, who would never suffer any picture or statue of him to be taken*, is not less universally known, than those who have been most fond of having their persons copied out for posterity. The single treatise which Xenophon has written in praise of that renowned general, is more to his glory, than all the pictures and statues of all the artists in the universe. It would be a much higher satisfaction to me, therefore, as it would be a far greater honour, to be recorded by your hand than that of any other; not only because your genius would raise and adorn my actions with the same advantage as Timæus† has displayed those of Timoleon,

* Agesilaus, king of Sparta, was one of the most considerable persons of his age, both for civil and military virtues; insomuch that he justly acquired the appellation of Agesilaus the *great*. But though nature had been uncommonly liberal to him in the nobler endowments of the mind, she had treated him very unfavourably in those of the body. He was remarkably low of stature, had one leg shorter than the other; and so very despicable a countenance, that he never failed of raising contempt in those who were unacquainted with his moral and intellectual excellencies. It is no wonder, therefore, that he was unwilling to be delivered down to posterity, under the disadvantage of so unpromising a figure.

† The works of Timæus are lost.

or Herodotus those of Themistocles ; but because of the additional credit I shall receive from the applause of so illustrious, so experienced, and so approved a patriot. By these means I shall enjoy, not only the same glorious privilege which, as Alexander observed when he was at Sigeum, Achilles received from Homer* ; but, what is still more important, the powerful testimony of a man, who is himself distinguished by the noblest and most uncommon virtues. Accordingly, I have been always wonderfully pleased with the sentiment which Nævius puts into the mouth of Hector, where that hero, speaking of the approbation he had received from his illustrious father, adds, that it gave him so much the more satisfaction, as coming from one who was, himself, the great object of universal applause. But should want of leisure, (for it would be an injustice to our friendship to suppose it can be want of inclination,) should your occupations then prevent your compliance with this my request ; I may, perhaps, be obliged to take a method, which, though often condemned, is supported, nevertheless, by several considerable examples : I mean, to be the historian of my own transactions. But you are sensible there are two inconveniences which attend this scheme : for a man must necessarily be more re-

* Alexander being elected commander in chief of the confederate troops which the Grecians sent against Xerxes, crossed the Hellespont with his army, and landed at Sigeum, a promontory near Troy, where he visited the tomb of Achilles. Upon this occasion, he is said to have broken out into the following exclamation: "O happy youth! in having found an Homer to celebrate thy virtues."

served in setting forth those parts of his conduct which merit approbation; as he will be inclined entirely to pass over others which may deserve reproach. I must add, likewise, that what a writer says to his own advantage, always carries with it a less degree of force and authority, than when it comes from any other pen. In a word, the world in general is little disposed to approve any attempt of this kind. On the contrary, one often hears the more modest method of the poets at the Olympic games, recommended upon such occasions, who, after they have crowned the several victors, and publicly called over their names, always employ some other person to perform the same office to themselves, that they may not be the heralds of their own applause. This imputation, therefore, I would willingly avoid: as I certainly shall, if you should comply with my request, and take this employment out of my hands.

You will be surprised, perhaps, that I spend so much time and pains in soliciting you for this purpose, after having so often heard you declare your intentions of giving the world a very accurate history of my administration. But you must remember the natural warmth of my temper, and that I am fired, as I told you in the beginning of my letter, with an impatient desire of seeing this your design carried into execution. To own the whole truth, I am ambitious of being known to the present generation by your writings, and to enjoy, in my lifetime, a fore-taste of that little share of glory which I may expect from future ages. If it be not too much trouble, therefore, I should be

glad you would immediately let me know your resolution. And should it prove agreeable to my request, I will draw up some general memoirs of my transactions for your use: if otherwise, I will take an opportunity of discoursing further with you upon this affair in person. In the mean time, continue to polish the work you have begun, and to love me as usual. Farewel.

LETTER VIII.

[A. U. 695.]

TO MARCUS MARIUS*.

IF your general valetudinary disposition prevented you from being a spectator of our late public entertainments†, it is more to fortune than to philosophy, that I am to impute your absence. But if you declined our party for no other reason than as holding in just contempt, what the generality of the world so absurdly admire, I must at once con-

* The person to whom this letter is addressed, seems to have been of a temper and constitution, that placed him far below the ambition of being known to posterity. But a private letter from Cicero's hand has been sufficient to dispel the obscurity he appears to have loved, and to render his retirement conspicuous.

† They were exhibited by Pompey, at the opening of his theatre; one of the most magnificent structures of ancient Rome, and so extensive as to contain no less than 80,000 spectators. It was built after the model of one which he saw at Mitylene, in his return from the Mithridatic war; and adorned with the noblest ornaments of statuary and painting. Some remains of this immense building still subsist.

gratulate you both on your health and your judgment. I say this upon a supposition, however, that you were enjoying the philosophical advantages of that delightful scene, in which, I imagine, you were almost wholly deserted. At the same time that your neighbours, probably, were nodding over the dull humour of our trite farces; my friend, I dare say, was indulging his morning meditations in that elegant apartment, from whence you have opened a prospect to Sejanum, through the Stabian hills*. And whilst you are employing the rest of the day in those various polite amusements, which you have the happy privilege to plan out for yourself; we, alas! had the mortification of tamely enduring those dramatical representations, to which Mæti^{us}, it seems, our professed critic, had given his infallible sanction! But as you will have the curiosity, perhaps, to require a more particular account; I must tell you, that though our entertainments were extremely magnificent indeed, yet they were by no means such as you would have relished: at least if I may judge of your taste by my own. Some of those actors who had formerly distinguished themselves with great applause, but had long since retired, I imagined, in order to preserve the reputation they had raised, were now again introduced upon the stage; as in honour, it seems, of the festival. Among these was my old friend Æsop^{us}†: but so different from what we

* Sejanum is found in no other ancient author. Stabiae was a maritime town in Campania, situated upon the bay of Naples, from whence the adjoining hills here mentioned took their name.

† He excelled in tragedy, and was the most celebrated actor that had ever appeared upon the Roman stage.

once knew him, that the whole audience agreed he ought to be excused from acting any more. For when he was pronouncing the celebrated oath,

If I deceive, be Jove's dread vengeance hurl'd, &c.
the poor old man's voice failed him, and he had not strength to go through with the speech. As to the other parts of our theatrical entertainments, you know the nature of them so well, that it is scarcely necessary to mention them. They had less, indeed, to plead in their favour than even the most ordinary representations of this kind can usually claim. The enormous parade with which they were attended, and which, I dare say, you would very willingly have spared, destroyed all the grace of the performance. What pleasure could it afford to a judicious spectator, to see a thousand mules prancing about the stage, in the tragedy of Clytæmnestra; or whole regiments accoutred in foreign armour, in that of the *Trojan Horse*? In a word, what man of sense could be entertained with viewing a mock army drawn up on the stage in battle-array? These, I confess, are spectacles extremely well adapted to captivate vulgar eyes; but undoubtedly would have had no charm in yours. In plain truth, my friend, you would have received more amusement from the dullest piece that Protogenes could possibly have read to you* (my own orations, however, let me always except), than we met with at these ridiculous shows. I am well persuaded, at least, you

* It was usual with persons of distinction amongst the Romans to keep a slave in their family, whose sole business it was to read to them. Protogenes seems to have attended Marius in that capacity.

could not regret the loss of our Oscian and Grecian farces*. Your own noble senate will always furnish you with drollery sufficient of the former kind†: and as to the latter, I know you have such an utter aversion to every thing that bears the name of Greek, that you will not even travel the Grecian road to your villa. As I remember you once despised our formidable gladiators, I cannot suppose you would have looked with less contempt on our athletic performers: and, indeed, Pompey himself acknowledges, that they did not answer the pains and expense they had cost him. The remainder of our diversions consisted in combats of wild beasts‡, which were exhibited every morning and afternoon during five days successively; and it must be owned, they were magnificent. Yet, after all, what entertainment can possibly

* The Oscian farces were so called from the Osci, an ancient people of Campania, from whom the Romans received them. They seem to have been of the same kind with our Bartholomew drolls, and to have consisted of low and obscene humour. As to the nature of the Greek farces, the critics are not agreed. Manutius supposes they differed only from the former, as being written in the Greek language. But it does not appear that Greek plays were ever represented upon the Roman stage: and the most probable account of them is, that they were a sort of pantomimes in imitation of those on the Grecian theatre.

† The municipal or corporate towns in Italy were governed by magistrates of their own, who probably made much the same sort of figure in their rural senate, as our burgesses in their town-hall.

‡ Beasts of the wildest and most uncommon kinds were sent for, upon these occasions, from every corner of the known world; and Dion Cassius relates, that no less than 500 lions were killed at these hunting matches, with which Pompey entertained the people.

arise to an elegant and humanized mind, from seeing a noble beast struck to the heart by its merciless hunter, or one of our own weak species cruelly mangled by an animal of much superior strength? But were there any thing really worth observing in spectacles of this savage kind, they are spectacles extremely familiar to you: and those I am speaking of had not any peculiar novelty to recommend them. The last day's sport was composed entirely of elephants; which, though they made the common people stare indeed, did not seem, however, to afford them any great satisfaction. On the contrary, the terrible slaughter of these poor animals, created a general commiseration: as it is a prevailing notion, that these creatures, in some degree, participate of our rational faculties.

That you may not imagine I had the happiness of being perfectly at my ease during the whole of this pompous festival, I must acquaint you, that while the people were amusing themselves at the plays, I was almost killed with the fatigue of pleading for your friend Gallus Caninius. Were the world as much inclined to favour my retreat, as they showed themselves in the case of Æsopus, believe me I would for ever renounce my art, and spend the remainder of my days with you and some others of the same philosophical turn. The truth of it is, I began to grow weary of this employment, even at a time when youth and ambition prompted my perseverance: and I will add, too, when I was at full liberty to exercise it in defence of those only whom I was inclined to assist. But in my present circumstances, it is absolute slavery.

For, on the one side, I never expect to reap any advantage from my labours of this kind; and on the other, in compliance with solicitations, which I cannot refuse, I am sometimes under the disagreeable necessity of appearing as an advocate in behalf of those who ill deserve that favour at my hands. For these reasons I am framing every possible pretence for living hereafter according to my own taste and sentiments: as I highly both approve and applaud that retired scene of life which you have so judiciously chosen. I am sensible, at the same time, that this is the reason you so seldom visit Rome. However, I the less regret that you do not see it oftener, as the numberless unpleasing occupations in which I am engaged would prevent me from enjoying the entertainment of your conversation, or giving you that of mine: if mine, indeed, can afford you any. But if ever I should be so fortunate as to disentangle myself, in some degree at least, (for I am contented not to be wholly released) from these perplexing embarrassments, I will undertake to show even my elegant friends, wherein the truest refinements of life consist. In the meanwhile, continue to take care of your health, that you may be able, when that happy time shall arrive, to accompany me in my litter to my several villas.

You must impute it to the excess of my friendship, and not to the abundance of my leisure, that I have lengthened this letter beyond my usual extent. It was merely in compliance with a request in one of yours, where you intimate a desire that I would compensate in this manner what you lost by not being present at our public diversions.

I shall be extremely glad if I have succeeded ; if not, I shall have the satisfaction however to think that you will, for the future, be more inclined to give us your company on these occasions, than to rely on my letters for your amusement. Farewel.

LETTER IX.

[A. U. 699.]

TO MARCUS LICINIUS CRASSUS.

I AM persuaded that all your friends have informed you of the zeal with which I lately both defended and promoted your dignities : as indeed it was too warm and too conspicuous to have been passed over in silence. The opposition I met with from the consuls*, as well as from several others of consular rank, was the strongest I ever encountered, and you must now look upon me as your declared advocate upon all occasions where your glory is concerned. Thus have I abundantly compensated for the intermission of those good offices, which the friendship between us had long given you a right to claim ; but which, by a variety of accidents, have lately been somewhat interrupted. There never was a time, believe me, when I wanted an inclination to cultivate your esteem, or promote your interest. Though, it must be owned, a certain set of men, who are the bane of all amicable intercourse, and who envied us the mutual honour that resulted from ours, have, upon

* The consuls of this year were L. Domitius Ahenobarbus, and Appius Claudius Pulcher.

some occasions, been so unhappily successful as to create a coolness between us. It has happened, however (what I rather wished than expected,) that I have found an opportunity, even when your affairs were in the most prosperous train, of giving a public testimony, by my services to you, that I always most sincerely preserved the remembrance of our former amity. The truth is, I have approved myself your friend, not only to the full conviction of your family in particular, but of all Rome in general. In consequence of which, that most valuable of women, your excellent wife*, together with those illustrious models of virtue and filial piety, your two amiable sons, have perpetual recourse to my assistance and advice; and the whole world is sensible, that no one is more zealously disposed to serve you than myself.

Your family correspondents have informed you, I imagine, of what has hitherto passed in your affair, as well as of what is at present in agitation. As for myself, I entreat you to do me the justice to believe, that it was not any sudden start of inclination, which disposed me to embrace this opportunity of vindicating your honour; on the contrary, it was my ambition, from the first moment I entered the forum, to be ranked in the number of your friends†. I have the satisfaction to reflect, that I have never, from that time to this hour, failed in the highest sentiments of

* This lady's name was Tertulla.

† Crassus was almost ten years older than Cicero; so that when the latter first appeared at the bar, the former had already established a character by his oratorical abilities.

esteem for you ; and, I doubt not, you have always retained the same affectionate regard towards me. If the effects of this mutual disposition have been interrupted by any little suspicions (for suspicions only, I am sure, they were), be the remembrance of them for ever blotted out of our hearts. I am persuaded, indeed, from those virtues which form your character, and from those which I am desirous should distinguish mine, that our friendly union, in the present conjuncture, cannot but be attended with equal honour to us both. What instances you may be willing to give me of your esteem, must be left to your determination ; but they will be such, I flatter myself, as may tend most to advance my dignities. For my own part, I faithfully promise the utmost exertion of my best services, in every article wherein I can contribute to increase yours. Many, I know, will be my rivals in these amicable offices, but it is a contention in which all the world, I question not, and particularly your two sons, will acknowledge my superiority. Be assured, I love them both in a very uncommon degree ; though I will own, that Publius is my favourite. From his infancy indeed, he discovered a singular regard to me, as he particularly distinguishes me at this time with all the marks even of filial respect and affection.

Let me desire you to consider this letter, not as a strain of unmeaning compliment, but as a sacred and solemn covenant of friendship, which I shall most sincerely and religiously observe. I shall now persevere in being the advocate of your honours, not only from a motive of affection, but

from a principle of constancy; and, without any application on your part, you may depend on my embracing every opportunity, wherein I shall think my services may prove agreeable to your interest, or your inclinations. Can you once doubt, then that any request to me for this purpose, either by yourself or your family, will meet with a most punctual observance? I hope, therefore, you will not scruple to employ me in all your concerns, of what nature or importance soever, as one who is most faithfully your friend: and that you will direct your family to apply to me in all their affairs of every kind, whether relating to you or to themselves, to their friends or their dependents. And be assured, I shall spare no pains to render your absence as little uneasy to them as possible. Farewel.

LETTER X.

[A. U. 699.]

TO JULIUS CÆSAR.*

I AM going to give you an instance how much I rely upon your affectionate services, not only towards myself, but in favour also of my friends. It was my intention, if I had gone abroad in any foreign employment, that Trebatius should have accompanied me; and he would not have returned without receiving the highest and most advantageous honours I should have been able to have

* Cæsar was at this time in Gaul, preparing for his first expedition into Britain.

conferred upon him. But as Pompey, I find defers setting out upon his commission longer than I imagined*: and I am apprehensive, likewise, that the doubts you know I entertain in regard to my attending him, may possibly prevent, as they will certainly at least delay, my journey, I take the liberty to refer Trebatius to your good offices, for those benefits he expected to have received from mine. I have ventured, indeed, to promise, that he will find you full as well-disposed to advance his interest, as I have always assured him he would find me: and a very extraordinary circumstance occurred, which seemed to confirm this opinion I entertained of your generosity. For, in the very instant I was talking with Balbus upon this subject, your letter was delivered to me: in the close of which you pleasantly tell me, that “in compliance with my request, you will make Orfius king of Gaul, or assign him over to Lepta, and advance any other person whom I should be inclined to recommend.” This had so remarkable a coincidence with our discourse, that it struck both Balbus and myself as a sort of a happy omen, that had something in it more than accidental. As it was my intention, therefore, before I received your letter, to have transmitted Trebatius to you;

* A law had lately passed, by which Pompey was invested with the government of Spain during five years: and it was upon this occasion that Cicero had thoughts of attending him as his lieutenant. Pompey, however, instead of going to his province, chose to continue in Italy: though he seems to have amused Cicero with a notion of his intending the contrary. For it appears, by a letter to Atticus, written towards the latter end of this year, that our author had fixed the day for his departure.

so I now consign him to your patronage, as upon your own invitation. Receive him then, my dear Cæsar, with your usual generosity; and distinguish him with every honour that my solicitations can induce you to confer. I do not recommend him in the manner you so justly rallied, when I wrote to you in favour of Orfius: but I will take upon me to assure you, in true Roman sincerity, that there lives not a man of greater modesty and merit. I must not forget to mention also (what indeed is his distinguishing qualification), that he is eminently skilled in the laws of his country, and happy in an uncommon strength of memory. I will not point out any particular piece of preferment which I wish you to bestow upon him: I will only, in general, entreat you to admit him into a share of your friendship. Nevertheless, if you should think proper to distinguish him with the tribunate or præfecture*, or any other little honours of that nature, I shall have no manner of objection. In good earnest, I entirely resign him out of my hands into yours, which never were lifted up in battle, or pledged in friendship, without effect.—But I fear I have pressed you farther upon this occasion than was necessary: however, I know you will excuse my warmth in the cause of a friend. Take care of your health, and continue to love me. Farewel.

* The military tribunes were next in rank to the lieutenants or commanders in chief under the general; as the *præfectus legionis* was the most honourable post in the Roman armies after that of the military tribunes. The business of the former was, among other articles, to decide all controversies that arose among the soldiers; and that of the latter was to carry the chief standard of the legion.

LETTER XI.

[A. U. 699.]

TO TREBATIUS*.

I NEVER write to Cæsar or Balbus, without taking occasion to mention you in the advantageous terms you deserve: and this in a style that evidently distinguishes me for your sincere well-wisher. I hope, therefore, you will check this idle passion for the elegancies of Rome, and resolutely persevere in the purpose of your journey, till your merit and assiduity shall have obtained the desired effect. In the mean time, your friends here will excuse your absence, no less than the ladies of Corinth did that of Medea in the play, when she artfully persuades them not to impute it to her as a crime, that she had forsaken her country; for, as she tells them,

There are who, distant from their native soil,
Still for their own and country's glory toil:
While some, fast-rooted to their parent-spot,
In life are useless, and in death forgot.

In this last inglorious class you would most certainly have been numbered, had not your friends

* This is the same person in whose behalf the foregoing letter to Cæsar is written, and which seems to have had so good an effect, that we find him mentioned by Suetonius as in the number of Cæsar's particular favourites. He appears, in this earlier part of his life, to have been of a more gay and indolent disposition than is consistent with making a figure in business; but he afterwards, however, became a very celebrated lawyer; and one of the most agreeable satires of Horace is addressed to him under that honourable character.

all conspired in forcing you from Rome. But more of this another time : in the mean while, let me advise you, who know so well how to manage securities for others, to *secure* yourself from the British charioteers*. And since I have been playing the Medea, let me make my exit with the following lines of the same tragedy, which are well worth your constant remembrance :

His wisdom, sure, on folly's confines lies,
Who, wise for others, for himself's unwise.

Farewel.

LETTER XII.

[A. U. 699.]

TO THE SAME.

I TAKE all opportunities of writing in your favour : and I should be glad you would let me know with what success. My chief reliance is on Balbus : in my letters to whom I frequently and warmly recommend your interest. But why do you not let me hear from you every time my brother dispatches a courier ?

I am informed there is neither gold nor silver in all Britain†. If that should be the case, I would advise you to seize one of the enemy's military

* The armies of the ancient Britons were partly composed of troops who fought in open chariots, to the axle-trees of which were fixed a kind of short scythe.

† A notion had prevailed among the Romans, that Britain abounded in gold and silver mines : and this report, it is probable, first suggested to Cæsar the design of conquering our island.

cars, and drive back to us with all expedition. But if you think you shall be able to make your fortune without the assistance of British spoils, by all means establish yourself in Cæsar's friendship. To be serious ; both my brother and Balbus will be of great service to you for that purpose : but, believe me, your own merit and assiduity will prove your best recommendation. You have every favourable circumstance indeed for your advancement that can be wished. On the one hand, you are in the prime and vigour of your years ; as on the other, you are serving under a commander distinguished for the generosity of his disposition, and to whom you have been recommended in the strongest terms. In a word, there is not the least fear of your success, if your own concurrence be not wanting. Farewel.

LETTER XIII.

[A. U. 699.]

TO TREBATIUS.

I HAVE received a very obliging letter from Cæsar, wherein he tells me, that though his numberless occupations have hitherto prevented him from seeing you so often as he wishes, he will certainly find an opportunity of being better acquainted with you. I have assured him, in return, how extremely acceptable his generous services to you would prove to myself. But surely you are much too precipitate in your determinations : and I could not but wonder that you should have refused

the advantages of a tribune's commission, especially as you might have been excused, it seems, from the functions of that post. If you continue to act thus indiscreetly, I shall certainly exhibit an *information* against you to your friends Vacerra and Manilius. I dare not venture, however, to *lay the case* before Cornelius : for, as you profess to have learned all your wisdom from his instructions, to arraign the pupil of imprudence would be a tacit reflection, you know, upon the tutor. But in good earnest, I conjure you not to lose the fairest opportunity of making your fortune, that probably will ever fall again in your way.

I frequently recommend your interests to Precianus, whom you mention ; and he writes me word that he has done you some good offices. Let me know of what kind they are. I expect a letter upon your arrival in Britain. Farewel.

LETTER XIV.

A. U. 669.

TO THE SAME.

I HAVE made your acknowledgments to my brother, in pursuance of your request : and am glad to have an occasion of applauding you for being fixed, at last, in some settled resolution. The style of your former letters, I will own, gave me a good deal of uneasiness. And allow me to say, that in some of them, you discovered an impatience to return to the polite refinements of Rome, which had the appearance of much levity : that, in some,

I regretted your indolence, and in others, your timidity. They frequently, likewise, gave me occasion to think, that you were not altogether so reasonable in your expectations, as is agreeable to your usual modesty. One would have imagined, indeed, you had carried a bill of exchange upon Cæsar, instead of a letter of recommendation : for you seemed to think you had nothing more to do than to receive your money and hasten home again. But money, my friend, is not so easily acquired : and I could name some of our acquaintance, who have been obliged to travel as far as Alexandria in pursuit of it, without having yet been able to obtain even their just demands*. If my inclinations were governed solely by my interest, I should certainly choose to have you here : as nothing affords me more pleasure than your company, or more advantage than your advice and assistance. But as you sought my friendship and patronage from your earliest youth, I always thought it incumbent upon me to act with a disinterested view to your welfare ; and not only to give you my protection, but to advance, by every means in my power, both your fortunes and your dignities. In consequence of which, I dare say you have not forgotten those unsolicited offers I made you, when I had thoughts of being employed abroad. I no sooner gave up my intentions of this kind, and perceived that Cæsar treated me with great distinction and friendship, than I recommended you, in the strongest and warmest

* This alludes to those who supplied Ptolemy with money when he was soliciting his affairs in Rome.

terms, to his favour, perfectly well knowing the singular probity and benevolence of his heart. Accordingly he shewed, not only by his letters to me, but by his conduct towards you, the great regard he paid to my recommendation. If you have any opinion, therefore, of my judgment, or imagine that I sincerely wish you well, let me persuade you to continue with him. And notwithstanding you should meet with some things to disgust you ; as business, perhaps, or other obstructions may render him less expeditious in gratifying your views than you had reason to expect ; still, however, persevere ; and trust me, you will find it prove in the end both for your interest and your honour. To exhort you any farther, might look like impertinence : let me only remind you, that if you lose this opportunity of improving your fortunes, you will never meet again with so generous a patron, so rich a province, or so convenient a season for this purpose. And (to express myself in the style of you lawyers) Cornelius has *given his opinion* to the same effect.

I am glad, for my sake, as well as yours, that you did not attend Cæsar into Britain : as it has not only saved *you* the fatigue of a very disagreeable expedition, but *me* likewise that of being the perpetual auditor of your wonderful exploits. Let me know in what part of the world you are likely to take up your winter-quarters, and in what post you are, or expect to be, employed. Farewel.

LETTER XV.

[A. U. 699.]

TO TREBATIUS.

IT is a considerable time since I have heard any thing from you. As for myself, if I have not written these three months, it was because, after you were separated from my brother, I neither knew where to address my letters, nor by what hand to convey them. I much wish to be informed how your affairs go on, and in what part of the world your winter-quarters are likely to be fixed. I should be glad they might be with Cæsar : but, as I would not venture, in his present affliction*, to trouble him with a letter, I have written upon that subject to Balbus. In the mean while, let me entreat you not to be wanting to yourself : and for my own part, I am contented to give up so much more of your company, provided the longer you stay abroad the richer you should return. There is nothing, I think, particularly to hasten you home, now that Vacerra is dead. However, you are the best judge, and I should be glad to know what you have determined.

* Cæsar, about this time, lost his daughter Julia, who died in child-bed. She was married to Pompey, who was so passionately fond of her, that she seems, during the short time they lived together, to have taken entire possession of his heart, and to have turned all his ambition into the single desire of appearing amiable in her eye. The death of this young lady proved a public calamity, as it dissolved the only forcible bond of union between her father and her husband, and hastened that rupture, which ended in the destruction of the commonwealth.

There is a queer fellow of your acquaintance, one Octavius or Cornelius (I do not perfectly recollect his name), who is perpetually inviting me, as a friend of yours, to sup with him. He has not yet prevailed with me to accept his compliment: however, I am obliged to the man. Farewel.

LETTER XVI.

[A. U. 699]

TO THE SAME.

I PERCEIVE, by your letter, that my friend Cæsar looks upon you as a most wonderful lawyer; and are you not happy in being thus placed in a country where you make so considerable a figure upon so small a stock? But with how much greater advantage would your noble talents have appeared, had you gone into Britain? Undoubtedly there would not have been so profound a sage in the law throughout all that extensive island.

Since your epistle has provoked me to be thus jocose, I will proceed in the same strain, and tell you there was one part of it I could not read without some envy; and how, indeed, could it be otherwise, when I found that, whilst much greater men were in vain attempting to get admittance to Cæsar, you were singled out from the crowd, and even summoned to an audience*? But after giving me an account of affairs which concern

* Trebatius, it is probable, had informed Cicero, in the letter to which this is an answer, that he had been summoned by Cæsar to attend him as his assessor upon some trial; which seems to have led our author into the raileries of this and the preceding passages.

others, why were you silent as to your own, assured as you are that I interest myself in them with as much zeal as if they immediately related to myself? Accordingly, as I am extremely afraid you will have no *employment* to keep you warm in your winter-quarters, I would, by all means, advise you to lay in a sufficient quantity of fuel. Both Mucius and Manilius* have *given their opinions* to the same purpose; especially as your *regimentals*, they apprehend, will scarcely be ready soon enough to secure you against the approaching cold. We hear, however, there has been *hot* work in your part of the world, which somewhat alarmed me for your safety; but I comforted myself with considering, that you are not altogether so *desperate* a soldier, as you are a lawyer. It is a wonderful consolation, indeed, to your friends, to be assured that your passions are not an overmatch for your prudence. Thus, as much as I know you love the water†, you would not venture, I find, to *cross* it with Cæsar; and though nothing could keep

* Mucius and Manilius, it must be supposed, were two lawyers, and particular friends of Trebatius as the humour of this witticism evidently consists in an allusion to that profession.

† The art of swimming was among the number of polite exercises in antient Rome, and esteemed a necessary qualification for every gentleman. Thus we find Cato the elder himself instructing his son in this accomplishment; as Augustus likewise performed the same office in the education of his two grandsons, Caius and Lucius. It was, indeed, one of the essential arts in military discipline, as both the soldiers and officers had frequently no other means of pursuing or retreating from the enemy. Accordingly the *Campus Martius*, a place where the Roman youth were taught the science of arms, was situated on the banks of the Tiber; and they constantly finished their exercises of this kind by throwing themselves into the river.

you from the combats* in Rome, you were much too wise, I perceive, to attend them in Britain.

But pleasantry apart: you know, without my telling you, with what zeal I have recommended you to Cæsar; though, perhaps, you may not be apprised, that I have frequently, as well as warmly, written to him upon that subject. I had, for some time, indeed, intermitted my solicitations, as I would not seem to distrust his friendship and generosity; however, I thought proper, in my last, to remind him once more of his promise. I desire you would let me know what effect my letter has produced, and at the same time give me a full account of every thing that concerns you. For I am exceedingly anxious to be informed of the prospect and situation of your affairs, as well as how long you imagine your absence is likely to continue. Be persuaded, that nothing could reconcile me to this separation, but the hopes of its proving to your advantage. In any other view, I should not be so impolitic as not to insist on your return; as you would be too prudent, I dare say, to delay it. The truth is, one hour's gay or serious conversation together, is of more importance to us, than all the foes and all the friends that the whole nation of Gaul can produce. I entreat you, therefore, to send me an immediate account in what posture your affairs stand; and be assured, as honest Chremes says to his neighbour in the play†,

Whatever cares thy lab'ring bosom grieve,
My tongue shall soothe them, or my hand relieve.

Farewel.

* Alluding to his fondness for the gladiatorial games.

† In Terence's play called the *Self-tormentor*.

LETTER XVII.

[A. U. 699.]

TO QUINTUS PHILIPPUS, PROCONSUL.

I CONGRATULATE your safe return from your province, in the fulness of your fame, and amidst the general tranquillity of the republic. If I were in Rome, I should have waited upon you, for this purpose, in person, and in order likewise to make my acknowledgments to you for your favours to my friends Egnatius and Oppius.

I am extremely sorry to hear that you have taken great offence against my friend and host, Antipater. I cannot pretend to judge of the merits of the case; but I know your character too well, not to be persuaded that you are incapable of indulging an unreasonable resentment. I conjure you, however, by our long friendship, to pardon, for my sake, his sons, who lie entirely at your mercy. If I imagined you could not grant this favour consistently with your honour, I should be far from making the request; as my regard for your reputation is much superior to all considerations of friendship which I owe to this family. But, if I am not mistaken (and, indeed, I very possibly may), your clemency towards them will rather add to your character, than derogate from it. If it be not too much trouble, therefore, I should be glad you would let me know how far a compliance with my request is in your power; for that it is in your inclination, I have not the least reason to doubt.—Farewel.

LETTER XVIII.

[A. U. 699.]

TO LUCIUS VALERIUS*, THE LAWYER.

For why should I not gratify your vanity with that honourable appellation? Since, as the times go, my friend, confidence will readily pass upon the world for skill.

I have executed the commission you sent me, and made your acknowledgments to Lentulus. But I wish you would render my offices of this kind unnecessary, by putting an end to your tedious absence. Is it not more worthy of your mighty ambition to be blended with your learned brethren at Rome, than to stand the sole great wonder of wisdom, amidst a parcel of paltry provincials? But I long to rally you in person: for which merry purpose I desire you would hasten hither as expeditiously as possible. I would by no means, however, advise you to take Apulia in the way, lest some disastrous adventure, in those unlucky regions, should prevent our welcoming your safe arrival. And, in truth, to what purpose should you visit this your native province†? For, like

* Valerius is only known by this letter and another, wherein Cicero recommends him to Appius as a person who lived in his family, and for whom he entertained a very singular affection. By the air of this epistle he seems to have been one of that sort of lawyers, who may more properly be said to be of the profession than the science.

† Manutius imagines that Cicero means to rally the obscurity of his friend's birth.

Ulysses, when he first returned to his Ithaca, you will be much too prudent, undoubtedly, to lay claim to your noble kindred. Farewel.

LETTER XIX.

[A. U. 700.]

TO CAIUS CURIO*.

THOUGH I am sorry you should suspect me of neglecting you, I will acknowledge that I am not so much concerned at your reproaches for my not writing, as I am pleased to find that you are desirous of hearing from me. Conscious, indeed, of not meriting your friendly accusation, the instance it afforded me, that my letters were acceptable to you, was a very agreeable proof of the continuance of that affection which I have already so frequently experienced. Believe me, I have never omitted writing, whenever any person offered whom I imagined likely to convey my letters into your hands; and which of your acquaintance, I will venture to ask, is a more punctual correspondent than myself? In return, however, I have scarcely received more than one or two letters from you since you left Rome; and those two extremely concise. Thus, you see, I can justly retort your charge; you must not, therefore, pass

* Curio was a young nobleman of great parts, spirit, and eloquence; but addicted, beyond all modesty or measures, to the prevailing luxury and gallantries of a most dissolute age. After having dissipated his fortune by extravagant indulgencies, for which no estate could suffice, he fell an easy prey to corruption.

too severe a sentence on your part, if you hope to receive a favourable one on mine. But I will dwell no longer on this article than to assure you, that since you are disposed to accept these memorials of my friendship, I doubt not of acquitting myself to your full satisfaction.

Though I regret extremely the being thus long* deprived of your very agreeable company, yet I cannot but rejoice at an absence which has contributed so much to your honour; as fortune, indeed, has, in all that concerns you, answered my warmest wishes. I have only to offer you one short piece of advice, and I offer it in compliance with the sincere dictates of that singular affection I bear you. Let me earnestly then entreat you, to come well-prepared, at your return, to act up to those great ideas which the world has, with so much reason, conceived of your spirit and talents. And as nothing can ever wear out the deep impressions your good offices have stamped upon my mind†; so, I hope, you will not forget, on your side, that you could not have attained those honours or advantages that attended you, if you had not, in the earlier part of your life, complied with my faithful and affectionate admonitions. Have I not reason, then, to expect in return, that, as the weight of old age now begins to bend me down‡, you will suffer me to repose my declining years upon your youth and friendship. Farewel.

* Curio had been most probably absent from Rome about two years; for Caius Clodius, to whom he is supposed to have been quæstor, obtained the government of Asia an. urb. 698.

† Curio assisted him in his contest with Clodius.

‡ Cicero was at this time in the 54th year of his age.

LETTER XX.

[A. U. 700.]

TO TREBATIUS.

IF you were not already in the number of our absentees, undoubtedly you would be tempted to leave us at this juncture, for what business can a lawyer expect in Rome, during this long and general suspension of all juridical proceedings! Accordingly, I advise my friends, who have any actions commenced against them, to petition each successive interrex* for a double enlargement of the usual time for putting in their pleas: and is not this a proof how wonderfully I have profited by your sage instructions in the law? But tell me, my friend, since your letters, I observe, have lately run in a more enlivened strain than usual, what is it that has elevated you into so gay a humour? This air of pleasantry I like well, it looks as if the world went successfully with you, and I am all impatience to know what it is that has thus raised your spirits. You inform me, indeed, that Cæsar does you the honour to advise with you. For my own part, however, I had rather that he *consulted* your interest, than your judgment. But seriously, if the former is really the case, or there is any probability of its proving so, let me entreat you to continue in your present

* This office of *Interrex* continued only five days; at the expiration of which, if consuls were not chosen, a new *Interrex* was appointed for the same short period. And in this manner the succession of these occasional magistrates was carried on, till the elections were determined.

situation, and patiently submit to the inconveniences of a military life ; as, on my part, I shall support myself under your absence with the hopes of its turning to your advantage. But if all expectations of this kind are at an end, let us see you as soon as possible ; and, perhaps, some method may be found here, of improving your fortunes. If not, we shall at least have the satisfaction of enjoying each other's company, and one hour's conversation together is of more value to us, my friend, than the whole city of Samarobriva. Besides, if you return soon, the disappointment you have suffered may pass unremarked ; whereas a longer pursuit to no purpose would be so ridiculous a circumstance, that I am terribly afraid it would scarcely escape the drollery of those very arch fellows*, Laberius and my companion Valerius. And what a burlesque character would a British lawyer furnish out for the Roman stage ! You may smile, perhaps, at this notion ; but though I mention it in my usual style of pleasantry, let me tell you it is no jesting matter. In good earnest, if there is any prospect that my recommendations will avail in obtaining the honours you deserve ; I cannot but exhort you, in all the sincerity of the warmest friendship, to make yourself easy under this absence, as a means of increas-

* Laberius was a Roman knight, who distinguished himself by his comic humours, and had written several farces which were acted with great applause. He was prevailed upon by Cæsar to take a part himself in one of his own performances, and the prologue which he spoke upon that occasion is still extant. Laberius was sixty years of age when, in compliance to Cæsar, he thus made his first entrance upon the stage.

ing both your fortunes and your fame: if not, I would strongly advise your return. I have no doubt, however, that your own merit, in conjunction with my most zealous services, will procure you every advantage you can reasonably desire. Farewel.

LETTER XXI.

[A. U. 700.].

TO TREBATIUS.

I WAS wondering at the long intermission of your letters, when my friend Pansa accounted for your insolence, by assuring me that you were turned an Epicurean. Glorious effect indeed of camp-conversation! But if a metamorphosis so extraordinary has been wrought in you amidst the martial air of Samarobriva, what would have been the consequence had I sent you to the softer regions of Tarentum*? I have been in some pain for your principles, I confess, ever since your intimacy with my friend Seius. But how will you reconcile your tenets to your profession, and act for the interest of your client, now that you have adopted the maxim of doing nothing but for your own? With what grace can you insert the usual clause in your deed of agreement: *The parties to these presents, as becomes good men and true, &c.*? For neither truth nor trust can there be in those who professedly govern themselves upon motives

* Tarentum was a city in Italy distinguished for the softness and luxury of its inhabitants.

of absolute selfishness? I am in some pain, likewise, how you will settle the law concerning the partition of "rights in common:" as there can be nothing in common between those who make their own private gratification the sole criterion of right and wrong. Or can you think it proper to administer an oath, while you maintain that Jupiter is incapable of all resentment? In a word, what will become of the good people of Ulubræ*, who have placed themselves under your protection; if you hold the maxim of your sect, "that a wise man ought not to engage himself in public affairs?" In good earnest I shall be extremely sorry, if it is true that you have really deserted us. But if your conversion is nothing more than a convenient compliment to the opinions of Pansa, I will forgive your dissimulation, provided you let me know soon how your affairs go on, and in what manner I can be of any service in them. Farewel.

LETTER XXII.

[A. U. 700.]

TO CAIUS CURIO.

OUR friendship, I trust, needs not any other evidence to confirm its sincerity, than what arises

* Cicero jocosely speaks of this people, as if they belonged to the most considerable town in Italy: whereas it was so mean and contemptible a place, that Horace, in order to shew the power of contentment, says, that a person possessed of that excellent temper of mind, may be happy even at Ulubræ.

from the testimony of our own hearts. I cannot, however, but consider the death of your illustrious father, as depriving me of a most venerable witness to that singular affection I bear you. I regret that he had not the satisfaction of taking a last farewell of you, before he closed his eyes : it was the only circumstance wanting to render him as much superior to the rest of the world in his domestic happiness, as in his public fame*.

I sincerely wish you the happy enjoyment of your estate : and be assured, you will find in me a friend who loves and values you with the same tenderness as your father himself conceived for you. Farewel.

LETTER XXIII.

[A. U. 700.]

TO TREBATIUS.

CAN you seriously suppose me so unreasonable as to be angry, because I thought you discovered so inconstant a disposition in your impatience to leave Gaul? And can you possibly believe it was for that reason I have thus long omitted writing? The truth is, I was only concerned at the uneasiness which seemed to have overcast your mind:

* He was consul in the year of Rome 676, when he acted with great spirit in opposition to the attempts of Sicinius, for restoring the tribunitial power, which had been much abridged by Sylla. In the following year he went governor into Macedonia, and, by his military conduct in that province, obtained the honour of a triumph. He distinguished himself among the friends of Cicero when he was attacked by Clodius.

and I forebore to write upon no other account, but as being entirely ignorant where to direct my letters. I suppose, however, that this is a plea which your loftiness will scarcely condescend to admit. But tell me then, is it the weight of your purse, or the honour of being the counsellor of Cæsar, that most disposes you to be thus insufferably arrogant? Let me perish if I do not believe that thy vanity is so immoderate, as to choose rather to share in his councils than his coffers. But should he admit you into a participation of both, you will undoubtedly swell into such intolerable airs, that no mortal will be able to endure you: or none, at least, except myself, who am philosopher enough, you know, to endure any thing. But I was going to tell you, that as I regretted the uneasiness you formerly expressed, so I rejoice to hear that you are better reconciled to your situation. My only fear is, that your wonderful skill in the law will little avail you in your present quarters; for I am told, that the people you have to deal with,

Rest the strength of their cause on the force of their
might,
And the sword is supreme arbitrator of right*.

As I know you do not choose to be concerned in *forcible entries*, and are much too peaceably disposed to be fond of making *assaults*, let me leave a piece of advice with my lawyer, and by all means recommend it to you to avoid the Treviri: for I

* Ennius.

† The Treviri were a most warlike people, bordering on Germany. They were defeated about this time by Labienus, one of Cæsar's lieutenants in Gaul.

hear they are most formidable fellows. I wish from my heart they were as harmless as their namesakes round the edges of our coin*. But I must reserve the rest of my jokes to another opportunity : in the mean time, let me desire you would send me a full account of whatever is going forward in your province. Farewel.

March the 4th.

LETTER XXIV.

[A. U. 700.]

TO TREBATIUS.

Two or three of your letters which lately came to my hands at the same time, though of different dates, have afforded me great pleasure : as they were proofs that you have reconciled yourself, with much spirit and resolution, to the inconveniences of a military life. I had some little suspicion, I confess, of the contrary ; not that I questioned your courage, but as imputing your uneasiness to the regret of our separation. Let me entreat you then to persevere in your present temper of mind : and, believe me, you will derive many and considerable advantages from the service in which you are engaged. In the meanwhile, I shall not fail to renew my solicitations to Cæsar in your favour, upon all proper occasions ; and have herewith sent you a Greek letter to deliver

* The public coin was under the inspection of three officers called *Treviri monetales* : and several pieces of money are still extant in the cabinets of the curious, inscribed with the names of these magistrates.

to him for that purpose: for, in truth, you cannot be more anxious than I am that this expedition may prove to your benefit. In return, I desire you will send me a full relation of the Gallic war: for you must know, I always depend most upon the accounts of those who are least engaged in the action.

As I do not imagine you are altogether so considerable a person as to retain a secretary in your service, I could not but wonder you should trouble yourself with the precaution of sending me several copies of the same letter. Your parsimony, however, deserves to be applauded; as one of them, I observed, was written upon a tablet that had been used before. I cannot conceive what unhappy composition could be so very miserable as to deserve to give place upon this occasion: unless it were one of your own conveyances. I flatter myself, at least, it was not any sprightly epistle of mine that you thus disgraced, in order to scribble over it a dull one of your own. Or was it your intention to intimate affairs go so ill with you, that you could not afford any better materials? If that should be your case, you must even thank yourself for not leaving your modesty behind you.

I shall recommend you in very strong terms to Balbus, when he returns into Gaul. But you must not be surprised if you should not hear from me again so soon as usual: as I shall be absent from Rome during all this month. I write this from Pomptinus, at the villa of Metrilius Philemon, where I am placed within hearing of those croaking clients whom you recommend to my protec-

tion : for a prodigious number, it seems, of your* Ulubrean frogs are assembled, in order to compliment my arrival among them. Farewel.

April the 5th.

P.S. I have destroyed the letter I received from you by the hands of Lucius Aruntius, though it was much too innocent to deserve so severe a treatment : for it contained nothing that might not have been proclaimed before a general assembly of the people. However it was your express desire I should destroy it : and I have complied accordingly. I will only add, that I wonder much at not having heard from you since : especially as so many extraordinary events have lately happened in your province.

LETTER XXV.

[A. U. 700.]

TO CAIUS CURIO.

NUMBERLESS are the subjects which may enter into a correspondence of the epistolary kind : but the most usual, and which indeed gave the first rise to this amicable commerce is, to inform an absent friend of those private affairs, which it may be necessary, either for his interest or our own, that he should know. You must not, however, expect any thing of the latter sort from me : as

* Cicero ludicrously gives the inhabitants of Ulubræ this appellation, in allusion to the low and marshy situation of their town.

your family correspondents, I am sensible, communicate to you what relates to your own concerns; and nothing new has happened in mine. There are two other species of letters, with which I am particularly pleased: those I mean that are written in the freedom and pleasantry of common conversation, and those which turn upon grave and moral topics. But in which of these it would be least improper for me to address you at this juncture, is a question not easily determined. Ill, indeed, would it become me to entertain you with letters of humour, at a season when every man of common sensibility has bidden adieu to mirth*. And what can Cicero write that shall deserve the serious thoughts of Curio, unless it be on public affairs? My situation, however, is such, that I dare not trust my real sentiments of those points in a letter: and none other will I ever send you. Thus precluded as I am from every other topic, I must content myself with repeating what I have often urged; and earnestly exhort you to the pursuit of true and solid glory. Believe me, it will require the utmost efforts of your care and resolution, to act up to those high and uncommon expectations which the world has conceived of your merit. There is, indeed, but one possible method that can enable you to surmount this arduous task. The method I mean is, by diligently cultivating those qualities which are the foundation of a just applause; of that applause, my friend, which I know is the constant object of your warmest am-

* Affairs at Rome were, at this time, in the utmost confusion, occasioned by the factious interruption that was given to the usual election of the magistrates.

bition. I might add much more to this purpose : but I am sensible you stand not in need of any incitements. And indeed I have thrown out these general hints, far less with a view of inflaming *your* heart, than of testifying the ardency with which I give you *mine*. Farewel.

LETTER XXVI.

[A. U. 700.]

TO CAIUS CURIO.

PUBLIC affairs are so circumstanced, that I dare not communicate my sentiments of them in a letter. This, however, I will venture in general to say, that I have reason to congratulate you on your removal from the scene in which we are engaged. But I must add, that in whatever part of the world you might be placed, you would still (as I told you in my last*) be embarked in the same common bottom with your friends here. I have another reason likewise for rejoicing in your absence, as it has placed your merit in full view of so considerable a number of the most illustrious citizens and allies of Rome : and indeed the reputation you have acquired is universally, and without the least exception, confirmed to us on all hands. But there is one circumstance attending you, upon which I know not whether I ought to send you my congratulations, or not : I mean with respect to those high and singular advantages

* The letter to which Cicero refers is not extant.

which the commonwealth promises itself from your return amongst us. Not that I suspect your proving unequal to the opinion which the world entertains of your virtues; but as fearing that whatever is most worthy of your care will be irrecoverably lost, ere your arrival to prevent it: such, alas, is the weak and well-nigh expiring condition of our unhappy republic! But prudence, perhaps, will scarcely justify me in trusting even this to a letter: for the rest, therefore, I must refer you to others. In the mean while, whatever your fears or your hopes of public affairs may be; think, my friend, incessantly think on those virtues which that generous patriot must possess, who, in these evil times, and amidst such a general depravation of manners, gloriously purposes to vindicate the ancient dignity and liberties of his oppressed country. Farewel.

LETTER XXVII.

[A. U. 700.]

TO TREBATIUS.

IF it were not for the compliments you sent me by Chrysippus, the freedman of Cyrus the architect, I should have imagined I no longer possessed a place in your thoughts. But surely you are become a most intolerable fine gentleman, that you could not bear the fatigue of writing to me; when you had the opportunity of doing so by a man, whom, you know, I look upon as one almost of my own family. Perhaps, however, you may

have forgotten the use of your pen, and so much the better, let me tell you, for your clients ; as they will lose no more causes by its blunders. But if it is myself only that has escaped your remembrance, I must endeavour to refresh it by a visit, before I am worn out of your mind beyond all power of recollection. After all, is it not the apprehension of the next summer's campaign, that has rendered your hand too unsteady to perform its office ? If so, you must even play over again the same gallant stratagem you practised last year in relation to your British expedition, and frame some heroic excuse for your absence. However, I was extremely glad to hear, by Chrysippus, that you are much in Cæsar's good graces. But it would be more like a man of equity, methinks, as well as more agreeable to my inclinations, if you were to give me frequent notice of what concerns you, by your own hand ; a satisfaction I should undoubtedly enjoy, if you had chosen to study the laws of good fellowship, rather than those of contention. You see I rally you as usual, in your own way, not to say a little in mine. But to end seriously ; be assured, as I greatly love you, I am no less confident than desirous of your affection in return. Farewel.

LETTER XXVIII.

[A. U. 700.]

TO TITUS FADIUS.

I KNOW not any event which has lately happened, that more sensibly affects me than your disgrace.

Far, therefore, from being capable of giving you the consolation I wish, I greatly stand in need of the same good office myself. Nevertheless, I cannot forbear, not only to exhort, but to conjure you likewise by our friendship, to collect your whole strength of reason, in order to support your afflictions with a firm and manly fortitude. Remember, my friend, that calamities are incident to all mankind, but particularly to us who live in these miserable and distracted times. Let it be your consolation, however, to reflect, that you have lost far less by fortune, than you have acquired by merit: as there are few, under the circumstances of your birth, who ever raised themselves to the same dignities; though there are numbers of the highest quality who have sunk into the same disgrace. To say truth; so wretched is the fate which threatens our laws, our liberties, and our constitution in general, that well may he esteem himself happily dealt with, who is dismissed from such a distempered government upon the least injurious terms. As to your own case, in particular, when you reflect that you are still undeprived of your estate: that you are happy in the affections of your children, your family, and your friends; and that, in all probability, you are only separated from them for a short interval: when you reflect, that among the great number of impeachments which have lately been carried on, yours is the only one that was considered as entirely groundless; that you were condemned by a majority of only one single vote; and that, too, universally supposed to have been given in compliance with some powerful influence.—These, un-

doubtedly, are considerations which ought greatly to alleviate the weight of your misfortune. I will only add, that you may always depend upon finding in me that disposition both towards yourself and your family, which is agreeable to your wishes, as well as to what you have a right to expect. Farewel.

LETTER XXIX.

[A. U. 702.]

TO VOLUMNIUS.

THE familiar manner in which your letter to me was addressed, though extremely agreeable indeed to the intimacy that subsists between us, made me at first doubt whether it did not come from my very good friend, your name-sake, the senator. But I soon found, by that lively and elegant humour with which it was distinguished, that it could be the produce of no other hand than yours. I was exceedingly pleased with it in every respect, but that I perceived you had not sufficiently discharged your trust, and defended the credit of my possessions as a wit. For you tell me, that, since I left Rome, every paltry joke, even those of the dull Sextius himself, is placed to my account. And did you suffer your friend to be thus dishonoured, without heroically standing forth in vindication of his genius? I was in hopes that my wit was stamped with such distinguishing marks as to prevent the possibility of its being mistaken. But it seems there is such a general depravation of taste in Rome, that no

man's conceits are so execrably vile, as not to meet with admirers. As you value my reputation then, assert boldly that every low thing which is repeated of this sort, is none of mine. And unless it be some smart pun, or elegant hyperbole, some striking paragram, or some arch and unexpected turn ; in a word, unless it answers the character of true humour, as described in my dialogue on oratory, I desire you would do me the favour most vehemently to swear, that mine you are confident it is not. With regard to those little pretenders to eloquence, of whom you complain, as having usurped my place in the Forum, I am much less concerned. Fare it as it may with plaintiffs and defendants of every kind, ~~I am~~ nothing disturbed ; no, not though the worthless Selius himself should be deemed eloquent enough to persuade the world that he is not an arrant slave. But in the article of wit, my friend—there, indeed, I am much too jealous not to assert my prerogative. It is an article, however, in which I stand in fear of no other competitor but yourself: for your pretensions, doubtless, are formidable. Yet when I say this, you will modestly suspect, perhaps, that I am bantering : and who but must own that Volumnius is a man of penetration ? To speak seriously : a most agreeable and lively vein of wit runs throughout your whole letter. I will confess, however, that what you mention concerning our friend, though you represent it in a very droll light, did not once make me smile. It is much my desire, I must own, that he should conduct himself through his tribunitial office with dignity ; not only for his own sake, as you know he is a

man I value, but for the sake likewise of my country : which, however ill it has treated me, I shall never cease to love.

And now, my dear Volumnius, I hope you will continue the agreeable correspondence you have begun, and give me frequent accounts of affairs both private and public : for, be assured, your letters are extremely pleasing to me. I entreat you, likewise, to endeavour to gain Dolabella entirely to my interests, by confirming him in that amicable disposition towards me, which, I know, he is inclined to entertain. Not that I suspect he wants any applications of this sort : but, as I am very desirous to make him my friend, it is a point, I think, that cannot be too much laboured. Farewel.

LETTER XXX.

[A. U. 703.]

TO TERENTIA AND TULLIA.

THE amiable young Cicero and myself are perfectly well, if you and my dearest Tullia are so. We arrived here* on the 14th of this month, after a very tedious and disagreeable passage, occasioned by contrary winds. Acastus† met me upon my landing, with letters from Rome ; having been so expeditious as to perform his journey in one-and-twenty days. In the packet which he delivered to me, I found yours, wherein you ex-

* Athens.

† A freedman belonging to Cicero.

press some uneasiness lest your former letters should not have reached my hands. They have, my Terentia: and I am extremely obliged to you for the very full accounts you gave me of every thing I was concerned to know.

I am by no means surprised at the shortness of your last, as you had reason to expect us so soon. It is with great impatience I wish for that meeting: though I am sensible, at the same time, of the unhappy situation in which I shall find the republic. All the letters, indeed, which I received by Acastus, agree in assuring me, that there is a general tendency to a civil war: so that when I come to Rome I shall be under a necessity of declaring myself on one side or the other. However, since there is no avoiding the scene which fortune has prepared for me, I shall be the more expeditious in my journey, that I may the better deliberate on the several circumstances which must determine my choice. Let me entreat you to meet me as far on my way as your health will permit.

The legacy which Precius has left me, is an acquisition that I receive with great concern: as I tenderly loved him, and extremely lament his death. If his estate should be put up to auction before my arrival, I beg you would recommend my interest in it to the care of Atticus: or in case his affairs should not allow him to undertake the office, that you would request the same favour of Camillus. And if this should not find you at Rome, I desire you would send proper directions thither for that purpose. As for my other affairs, I hope I shall be able to settle them myself: for

I purpose to be in Italy, if the gods favour my voyage, about the 13th of November. In the mean time I conjure you, my amiable and excellent Terentia, and you, my dearest Tullia, I conjure you both, by all the tender regards you bear me, to take care of your healths. Farewel.

Athens, October the 15th.

LETTER XXXI.

[A. U. 703.]

TO TIRO*.

I DID not imagine I should have been so little able to support your absence : but indeed it is more than I can well bear. Accordingly, notwithstanding it is of the last importance to my interest that I should hasten to Rome, yet I cannot but severely reproach myself for having thus deserted you. However, as you seemed altogether averse from pursuing your voyage till you should re-establish your health, I approved of your scheme : and I still approve of it, if you continue in the same sentiments. Nevertheless, if, after having taken some refreshment, you should think yourself in a condition to follow me, you may do so, or not, as you shall judge proper. If you should determine in the affirmative, I have sent Mario to attend you :

* He was a favourite slave of Cicero, who trained him up in his family, and formed him under his own immediate tuition. The probity of his manners, the elegance of his genius, and his uncommon erudition, recommended him to his master's peculiar esteem and affection.

if not, I have ordered him to return immediately. Be well assured, there is nothing I more ardently desire than to have you with me, provided I may enjoy that pleasure without prejudice to yourself. But be assured too, that if your continuing somewhat longer at Patræ* should be thought necessary, I prefer your health to all other considerations. If you should embark immediately, you may overtake me at Leucas†. But if you are more inclined to defer your voyage till your recovery shall be better confirmed, let me entreat you to be very careful in choosing a safe ship; and that you would neither sail at an improper season nor without a convoy. I particularly charge you, also, my dear Tiro, by all the regard you bear me, not to suffer the arrival of Mario, or any thing that I have said in this letter, in the least to influence your resolution. Believe me, whatever will be most agreeable to your health, will be most agreeable likewise to my inclinations: and therefore I desire you would be wholly governed by your own prudence. It is true, I am extremely desirous of your company, and of enjoying it as early as possible: but the same affection which makes me wish to see you soon, makes me wish to see you well. Let your health, therefore, be your first and principal care; assuring yourself, that among all the numberless

* A city in Peloponnesus, which still subsists under the name of Patras. Cicero had left Tiro indisposed in this place, the day before the date of the present letter.

† A little Grecian island in the Ionian sea, now called Saint Maure. It was on this island that the celebrated promontory stood, from whence the tender Sappho is said to have thrown herself in a fit of amorous despair.

good offices I have received at your hands, I shall esteem this by far the most acceptable.

November the 3d.

LETTER XXXII.

[A. U. 703.]

TO TIRO.

THIS is the third letter I have written to you within these four-and-twenty hours ; and I now take up my pen more in compliance with my usual custom, than as having any thing new to say. I can only repeat, indeed, what I have often requested, that you would proportion the care of your health to the affection you bear me. Yes, my Tiro, I conjure you to add this to the numberless good offices you have conferred upon me, as the most acceptable of them all. When you have taken, as I hope you will, all necessary measures for that purpose, my next desire is, that you would use the proper precautions, likewise, to secure to yourself a safe voyage. In the mean time, you will not fail to write to me, as often as you shall meet with any person who is coming into Italy, as I shall take all occasions of doing the same on my part, by those who may be going to Patras. In one word, take care of yourself, my dear Tiro, I charge you ; and since we have been thus prevented from pursuing our voyage together, there is no necessity for resuming your's in haste. Let it be your single care to re-establish your health. Again and again farewell.

Actium, Nov. the 5th, in the evening.*

* ▲ city in Epirus.

LETTER XXXIII.

[A. U. 703.]

TO THE SAME:

WE parted, you know, on the second of November. On the sixth I arrived at Leucas, from whence I reached Actium the following day. I was detained there, by contrary winds, till the next morning, when I sailed for Corcyra, where I arrived on the 9th, after having had a very favourable passage. The weather proving extremely tempestuous, I was obliged to continue in that place till the sixteenth, when I again proceeded on my voyage: and on the seventeenth, I entered the bay of Cassiope, a maritime town in Corcyra, situated about an hundred and twenty stadia from my former port. Here the wind shifting, I was detained till the 23d. In the mean time, those ships that had accompanied me thither, and were so impatient as immediately to put to sea again, were many of them lost. However, on the evening of the day I last mentioned, we weighed anchor; and having sailed all that night and the next day with a fair gale from the south, and a very clear sky, we gained, with great ease, the port of Hydruns, in Italy. The same wind carried us the following day, being the twenty-fifth, to Brundisium. I was met at this place by Terentia (who desires me to assure you of her esteem), and we entered the town together. On the twenty-seventh a slave of Plancius arrived here with your very acceptable letter, dated the

thirteenth of this month ; which, though it did not entirely answer my wishes, contributed greatly to alleviate the uneasiness I was under upon your account. I had the satisfaction likewise of hearing at the same time from your physician, who confirms me in the hope that you will soon be well.

And now, as I perfectly well know your prudence, your temperance, and the affection you bear me, can it be necessary that I should entreat you to employ your utmost care to re-establish your health? I am persuaded, indeed, you will do every thing in your power to return to me as soon as possible : however, I would by no means have you more expeditious than your strength will bear. I am sorry you accepted Lyso's invitation to his concert, lest your going abroad so soon should occasion a relapse on the fourth critical week*. But, since you were willing to hazard your health rather than appear deficient in point of politeness, I hope you will guard against any ill consequence that may attend your complaisance.

I have written to Curius, to request he would make a proper acknowledgment to your physician, and supply you likewise with whatever money your occasions shall require ; which I will repay to his order. You will find a horse and a

* The ancients entertained a variety of superstitious notions concerning the mystical power of numbers, particularly the number seven, with its several multiplications and divisions. Cicero, in one of his philosophical treatises, calls this number *rerum omnium fere nodus* ; and it is to its particular influence with regard to the crisis of distempers, that he alludes in the present passage.

mule at Brundisium, which I have left there for your service. I am proceeding on my journey to Rome, where I expect to see great commotions upon the entrance of the new consuls into their office*. However, it is my resolution not to engage in the violent measures of either party.

I have only to add my most earnest request that you would not embark without taking all prudent precautions to secure a safe voyage. The masters of ships, I know, who are governed entirely by their hopes of gain, are always in haste to sail. But I entreat you, my dear Tiro, not to be too hazardous; and remember that you have a wide and dangerous sea to traverse. I should be glad you would, if possible, take your passage with Mescinius, who is never disposed to run any imprudent risks in expeditions of this kind. But if your health should not permit you to embark so soon, let me desire you will look out for some other companion in your voyage, whose public character may give him an authority with the commander of your ship. In a word, you cannot more effectually oblige me, than by exerting your utmost care to return to me safe and well. Again and again, my dear Tiro, I bid you adieu.

I have recommended you in the strongest terms to the care both of Curius and Lyso, as well as of your physician. Adieu.

* The consuls entered upon their office on the first day of the new year.

LETTER XXXIV.

[A. U. 704.]

TO TIRO.

NOTWITHSTANDING that I feel the want of your services, in every place and upon all occasions; yet, be assured, your illness gives me far less concern on my own account, than on yours. However, since it has terminated, as Curius informs me, in a quartan ague; I hope, if you are not wanting in proper care, that it will prove a mean of more firmly establishing your health. Be so just, then, to the regard you owe me, as not to suffer any other concern to employ your thoughts but what relates to your recovery. I am sensible, at the same time, how much you suffer from this absence; but, believe me, all will be well whenever you are so. I would by no means, therefore, have you in so much haste to return to me, as to expose yourself to the dangers of a winter voyage; nor, indeed, to the fatigue of a sea-sickness, before you shall have sufficiently recovered your strength.

I arrived in the suburbs of Rome on the fourth of January, and nothing could be more to my honour than the manner in which I was met on my approach to the city. But I am unhappily fallen into the very midst of public dissention; or rather, indeed, I find myself surrounded with the flames of a civil war. It was my earnest desire to have composed these dangerous ferments; and I probably might, if the passions of some, in both parties, who are equally eager for war, had not

rendered my endeavours ineffectual. My friend Cæsar has written a very warm and menacing letter to the senate. He has the assurance, notwithstanding their express prohibition, to continue at the head of his army, and in the government of his province; to which very extraordinary measures he has been instigated by Curio. The latter, in conjunction with Quintus Cassius and Mark Antony, without the least violence having been offered to them, have withdrawn themselves to Cæsar. They took this step immediately after the senate had given it in charge to the consuls*, the prætors, and the tribunes of the people, together with those of us who are invested with proconsular power, to take care of the interests of the republic†. And never, in truth, were our liberties in more imminent danger; as those who are disaffected to the commonwealth never were headed by a chief more capable, or better prepared to support them. We are raising forces with all possible diligence, under the authority and with the assistance of Pompey, who now begins, somewhat too late, I fear, to be apprehensive of Cæsar's power. In the midst, however, of these alarming commotions, the senate demanded, in a very full house, that a triumph should be immediately decreed to me. But the consul

* The consuls of this year were Clodius Marcellus and Cornelius Lentulus Crus.

† By this decree, the magistrates therein named were invested with a discretionary power of acting as they should judge proper in the present exigency of public affairs; a decree to which the senate never had recourse, but in cases of the utmost danger and distress.

Lentulus, in order to appropriate to himself a greater share in conferring this honour, told them, that he would propose it himself in proper form, as soon as he should have dispatched the affairs that were necessary in the present conjuncture. In the mean time, I act with great moderation : and this conduct renders my influence with both parties so much the stronger. The several districts of Italy are assigned to our respective protections ; and Capua is the department I have taken for mine.

I thought it proper to give you this general information of public affairs ; to which I will only add my request, that you would take care of your health, and write to me by every opportunity. Again and again I bid you farewell,

Jan. the 12th.

LETTER XXXV.

[A. U. 704.]

TO TERENTIA AND TO TULLIA.

IN what manner it may be proper to dispose of yourselves during the present conjuncture, is a question which must now be decided by your own judgments as much as by mine. Should Cæsar advance to Rome, without committing hostilities, you may certainly, for the present at least, remain there unmolested : but if this madman should give up the city to the rapine of his soldiers, I much doubt whether even Dolabella's credit and authority will be sufficient to protect you. I am under some apprehension likewise, lest, while

you are deliberating in what manner to act, you should find yourselves so surrounded with the army as to render it impossible to withdraw, though you should be ever so much inclined. The next question is, (and it is a question which you yourselves are best able to determine), whether any ladies of your rank venture to continue in the city: if not, will it be consistent with your character to appear singular in that point? But be that as it will, you cannot, I think, as affairs are now situated, be more commodiously placed, than either with me, or at some of our farms in this district: supposing, I mean, that I should be able to maintain my present post. I must add, likewise, that a short time, it is to be feared, will produce a great scarcity in Rome. However, I should be glad you would take the sentiments of Atticus, or Camillus, or any other friend whom you may choose to consult upon this subject. In the mean while let me conjure you both to keep up your spirits. The coming over of Labienus to our party, has given affairs a much better aspect. And Piso having withdrawn himself from the city, is another very favourable circumstance: as it is a plain indication, that he disapproves the impious measures of his son-in-law.

I entreat you, my dearest creatures, to write to me as frequently as possible, and let me know how it is with you, as well as what is going forward in Rome. My brother and nephew, together with Rufus, affectionately salute you. Farewel.

Minturnæ, Jan. the 25th.*

* A town in Campania.

LETTER XXXVI.

[A. U. 704.]

TO TERENTIA AND TO TULLIA.

IT well deserves consideration, whether it will be more prudent for you to continue in Rome, or to remove to some secure place within my department; and it is a consideration, my dearest creatures, in which your own judgments must assist mine. What occurs to my present thoughts is this. On the one hand, as you will probably find a safe protection in Dolabella, your residing in Rome may prove a mean of securing our house from being plundered; should the soldiers be suffered to commit any violences of that kind. But, on the other, when I reflect that all the worthier part of the republic have withdrawn themselves and their families from the city, I am inclined to advise you to follow their example. I must add likewise, that there are several towns in this canton of Italy under my command, which are particularly in our interest: as also, that great part of our estate lies in the same district. If therefore you should remove hither, you may not only very frequently be with me, but whenever we shall be obliged to separate, you may be safely lodged at one or other of my farms. However, I am utterly unable to determine, at present, which of these schemes is preferable: only let me entreat you to observe what steps other ladies of your rank pursue in this conjuncture; and be cautious likewise, that you be not prevented

from retiring, should it prove your choice. In the mean time, I hope you will maturely deliberate upon this point between yourselves; and take the opinion also of our friends. At all events, I desire you would direct Philotimus to procure a strong guard to defend our house: to which request I must add, that you would engage a proper number of regular couriers, in order to give me the satisfaction of hearing from you every day. But above all, let me conjure you both to take care of your health as you wish to preserve mine. Farewel.

Formiæ, the 25th.

LETTER XXXVII.

[A. U. 704.]

TO TERENTIA.

I AM entirely free from the disorder in my stomach; which was the more painful, as I saw it occasioned both you and that dear girl, whom I love better than my life, so much uneasiness. I discovered the cause of this complaint the night after I left you, having discharged a great quantity of phlegm. This gave me so immediate a relief, that I cannot but believe I owe my cure to some heavenly interposition: to Apollo, no doubt, and Æsculapius. You will offer up your grateful tributes, therefore, to these restoring powers, with all the ardency of your usual devotion.

I am this moment embarked*: and have pro-

* In order to join Pompey in Greece, who had left Italy about three months before the date of this letter.

cured a ship which I hope is well able to perform her voyage. As soon as I shall have^e finished this letter, I propose to write to several of my friends, recommending you and our dearest Tullia in the strongest terms to their protection. In the mean time I should exhort you to keep up your spirits, if I did not know that both of you are animated with a more than manly fortitude. And, indeed, I hope there is a fair prospect of your remaining in Italy without any inconvenience, and of my returning to the defence of the republic, in conjunction with those who are no less faithfully devoted to its interest.

After earnestly recommending to you the care of your health, let me make it my next request, that you would dispose of yourself in such of my villas as are at the greatest distance from the army. And if provisions should become scarce in Rome, I should think you will find it most convenient to remove with your servants to Arpinum.

The amiable young Cicero most tenderly salutes you. Again and again I bid you farewell.

June the 11th.

LETTER XXXVIII.

[A. U. 704.]

TO TERENCE*.

I AM informed, by the letters of my friends, as well as by other accounts, that you have had a sudden

* This letter was written by Cicero, in the camp at Dyrrachium; for there is one extant to Atticus later than this, and dated from the camp.

attack of a fever. I entreat you, therefore, to employ the utmost care in re-establishing your health.

The early notice you gave me of Cæsar's letter was extremely agreeable to me; and let me desire you would send me the same expeditious intelligence, if any thing should hereafter occur that concerns me to know. Once more I conjure you to take care of your health. Farewel.

June the 2d.

LETTER XXXIX.

[A. U. 704.]

TO THE SAME*.

I ENTREAT you to take all proper measures for the recovery of your health. Let me request, likewise, that you would provide whatever may be necessary in the present conjuncture, and that you would send me frequent accounts how every thing goes on. Farewel.

LETTER XL.

[A. U. 704.]

TO THE SAME.

I HAVE seldom an opportunity of writing, and scarce any thing to say that I choose to trust in a letter. I find, by your last, that you cannot meet

* This letter was probably written soon after the foregoing, and from the same place.

with a purchaser for any of our farms. I beg, therefore, you would consider of some other method of raising money, in order to satisfy that person who, you are sensible, I am very desirous should be paid*. I am by no means surprised that you should have received the thanks of our friend, as I dare say she had great reason to acknowledge your kindness.

If Pollex† is not yet set out, I desire you would exercise your authority, and force the loiterer to depart immediately. Farewel.

July the 15th.

LETTER XLI.

[A. U. 704.]

TO TERENTIA.

MAY the joy you express at my safe arrival in Italy‡ be never interrupted! But my mind was so much discomposed by those atrocious injuries I had received, that I have taken a step, I fear, which may be attended with great difficulties. Let me then entreat your utmost assistance;

* This letter, as well as the two former, was written while Cicero was with Pompey in Greece.

† It appears, by a letter to Atticus, that this person acted as a sort of steward in Cicero's family.

‡ After the battle of Pharsalia, Cicero would not engage himself any farther with the Pompeian party; but having endeavoured to make his peace with Cæsar by the mediation of Dolabella, he seems to have received no other answer than an order to return immediately into Italy. And this he accordingly did a few days before the date of the present letter.

though I must confess, at the same time, that I know not wherein it can avail me.

I would by no means have you think of coming hither. For the journey is both long and dangerous, and I do not see in what manner you could be of any service. Farewel.

Brundisium, Nov. the 5th.

LETTER XLII.

[A. U. 704.]

TO THE SAME.

THE ill state of health into which Tullia is fallen, is a very severe addition to the many and great inquietudes that afflict my mind. But I need say nothing farther upon this subject, as I am sure her welfare is no less a part of your tender concern than it is of mine.

I agree both with you and her in thinking it proper that I should advance nearer to Rome; and I should have done so before now, if I had not been prevented by several difficulties, which I am not yet able to remove. But I am in expectation of a letter from Atticus, with his sentiments upon this subject; and I beg you would forward it to me by the earliest opportunity. Farewel.

LETTER XLIII.

[A. U. 704.]

TO TERENTIA.

IN addition to my other misfortunes, I have now to lament the illness both of Dolabella and Tullia. The whole frame of my mind is, indeed, so utterly discomposed, that I know not what to resolve, or how to act, in any of my affairs. I can only conjure you to take care of yourself and of Tullia. Farewel.

LETTER XLIV.

[A. U. 704.]

TO THE SAME.

IF any thing occurred worth communicating to you, my letters would be more frequent and much longer. But I need not tell you the situation of my affairs; and, as to the effect they have upon my mind, I leave it to Lepta and Trebatius to inform you. I have only to add my entreaties, that you would take care of your own and Tullia's health. Farewel.

LETTER XLV.

[A. U. 704.]

TO TITUS.

THERE is none of your friends less capable than I am to offer consolation to you under your pre-

sent affliction ; as the share I take in your loss renders me greatly in need of the same good office myself. However, as my grief does not rise to the same extreme degree as yours, I should not think I discharged the duty which my connexion and friendship with you require, if I remained altogether silent at a time when you are thus overwhelmed with sorrow. I determined, therefore, to suggest a few reflections to you which may alleviate, at least, if not entirely remove, the anguish of your heart.

There is no maxim of consolation more common ; yet, at the same time, there is none which deserves to be more frequently in our thoughts, than that we ought to remember, “we are men ;” that is, creatures who are born to be exposed to calamities of every kind ; and, therefore, “that it becomes us to submit to the conditions by which we hold our existence, without being too much dejected by accidents which no prudence can prevent.” In a word, that we should learn, by “reflecting on the misfortunes which have attended others, that there is nothing singular in those which befall ourselves.” But neither these nor other arguments to the same purpose, which are inculcated in the writings of the philosophers, seem to have so strong a claim to success, as those which may be drawn from the present unhappy situation of public affairs, and that endless series of misfortunes which is rising upon our country. They are such, indeed, that one cannot but account those to be most fortunate, who never knew what it was to be a parent ; and as to those persons who are deprived of their children, in these

times of general anarchy and mis-rule, they have much less reason to regret their loss, than if it had happened in a more flourishing period of the commonwealth, or while yet the republic had any existence. If your tears flow, indeed, from this accident, merely as it affects your own personal happiness, it may be difficult, perhaps, entirely to restrain them. But if your sorrow takes its rise from a more enlarged and benevolent principle ; if it be for the sake of the dead themselves that you lament, it may be an easier task to assuage your grief. I shall not here insist upon an argument, which I have frequently heard maintained in conversations, as well as often read likewise in treatises that have been written upon this subject. "Death," say those philosophers, "cannot be considered as an evil ; because, if any consciousness remains after our dissolution, it is rather an entrance into immortality, than an extinction of life ; and if none remains, there can be no misery where there is no sensibility." Not to insist, I say, upon any reasonings of this nature ; let me remind you of an argument which I can urge with much more confidence. He who has made his exit from a scene where such dreadful confusion prevails, and where so many approaching calamities are in prospect, cannot possibly, it should seem, be a loser by the exchange. Let me ask, not only where honour, virtue, and probity, where true philosophy and the useful arts, can now fly for refuge ; but where even our liberties and our lives can be secure ? For my own part, I have never once heard of the death of any youth during all this last sad year, whom I have not considered

as kindly delivered by the immortal gods from the miseries of these wretched times. If, therefore, you can be persuaded to think that their condition is by no means unhappy, whose loss you so tenderly deplore ; it must undoubtedly prove a very considerable abatement of your present affliction. For it will then entirely arise from what you feel upon your own account ; and have no relation to the persons whose death you regret. Now it would ill agree with those wise and generous maxims which have ever inspired your breast, to be too sensible of misfortunes which terminate in your own person, and affect not the happiness of those you love. You have upon all occasions, both public and private, shewn yourself animated with the firmest fortitude : and it becomes you to act up to the character you have thus justly acquired. Time necessarily wears out the deepest impressions of sorrow : and the weakest mother that ever lost a child, has found some period to her grief. But we should wisely anticipate that effect which a certain revolution of days will undoubtedly produce : and not wait for a remedy from time, which we may much sooner receive from reason.

If what I have said can any thing avail in lessening the weight of your affliction, I shall have obtained my wish : if not, I shall at least have discharged the duties of that friendship and affection which, believe me, I ever have preserved, and ever shall preserve, towards you. Farewel.

LETTER XLVI.

[A. U. 705.]

TO TERENTIA.

MY affairs are, at present, in such a situation, that I have no reason to expect a letter on your part, and have nothing to communicate on mine. Yet I know not how it is, I can no more forbear flattering myself that I may hear from you, than I can refrain from writing to you whenever I meet with a conveyance.

Volumnia ought to have shewn herself more zealous for your interest: and in the particular instance you mention, she might have acted with greater care and caution. This, however, is but a slight grievance amongst others which I far more severely feel and lament. They have the effect upon me, indeed, which those persons undoubtedly wished, who compelled me into measures utterly opposite to my own sentiments. Farewel.

December the 31st.

LETTER XLVII.

[A. U. 706.]

TO THE SAME.

TULLIA arrived here* on the 12th of this month†. It extremely affected me to see a woman of her singular and amiable virtues reduced (and reduced

* Brundisium: where Cicero was still waiting for Cæsar's arrival from Egypt.

† June.

too by my own negligence) to a situation far other than is agreeable to her rank and filial piety*.

I have some thoughts of sending my son, accompanied by Sallustius, with a letter to Cæsar†: and if I should execute this design, I will let you know when he sets out. In the mean time be careful of your health, I conjure you. Farewel.

LETTER XLVIII.

[A. U. 706.]

TO THE SAME.

I HAD determined, agreeably to what I mentioned in my former, to send my son to meet Cæsar on his return to Italy. But I have since altered my resolution, as I hear no news of his arrival. For the rest I refer you to Sicca, who will inform you what measures I think necessary to be taken: though I must add, that nothing new has occurred since I wrote last. Tullia is still with me.—Adieu, and take all possible care of your health.

June the 20th.

* Dolabella was greatly embarrassed in his affairs: and it seems by this passage as if he had not allowed Tullia a maintenance, during his absence abroad, sufficient to support her rank and dignity.

† In order to supplicate Cæsar's pardon, for having engaged against him on the side of Pompey.

LETTER XLIX.

[A. U. 706.]

TO TERENTIA.

I WROTE to Atticus (somewhat later indeed than I ought) concerning the affair you mention. When you talk to him upon that head, he will inform you of my inclinations : and I need not be more explicit here, after having written so fully to him. Let me know as soon as possible what steps are taken in that business : and acquaint me at the same time with every thing else which concerns me. I have only to add my request, that you would be careful of your health. Farewel.

July the 9th.

LETTER L.

[A. U. 706.]

TO THE SAME.

IN answer to what you object concerning the divorce I mentioned in my last*, I can only say, that I am perfectly ignorant what power Dolabella may at this time possess, or what ferments there may be among the populace. However, if you think there is any thing to be apprehended from his resentment, let the matter rest : and, perhaps, the first proposal may come from himself. Nevertheless, I leave you to act as you shall judge proper ; not doubting that you will take such mea-

* Between Tullia and Dolabella.

asures in this most unfortunate affair, as shall appear to be attended with the fewest unhappy consequences. Farewel.

July the 10th.

LETTER LI.

[A. U. 706.]

TO THE SAME.

I HAVE not yet heard any news either of Cæsar's arrival, or of his letter which Philotimus, I was informed, had in charge to deliver to me. But be assured, you shall immediately receive the first certain intelligence I shall be able to send you. Take care of your health. Adieu.

August the 11th.

LETTER LII.

[A. U. 706.]

TO THE SAME.

I HAVE at last received a letter from Cæsar, and written in no unfavourable terms. It is now said that he will be in Italy much sooner than was expected. I have not yet resolved whether to wait for him here, or to meet him on his way; but as soon as I shall have determined that point, I will let you know.

I beg you would immediately send back this messenger; and let me conjure you, at the same time, to take all possible care of your health. Farewel.

August the 12th.

LETTER LIII.

[A. U. 706.]

TO TERENCE.

I AM in daily expectation of my couriers, whose return will, perhaps, render me less doubtful what course to pursue*. As soon as they shall arrive, I will give you immediate notice. Mean while be careful of your health. Farewel.

September the 1st.

LETTER LIV.

[A. U. 706.]

TO THE SAME.

I PURPOSE to be at my Tusculan villa about the 7th or 8th of this month. I beg that every thing may be ready for my reception, as I shall, perhaps, bring several friends with me; and I may probably, too, continue there some time. If a vase is wanting in the bath, let it be supplied with one; and I desire you would, likewise, provide whatever else may be necessary for the health and entertainment of my guests. Farewel.

Venusia†, October the 1st.

* Whether to wait at Brundisium the arrival of Cæsar, or to set out in order to meet him.

† Now called Venosa, a town in the kingdom of Naples, situated at the foot of the Appennine mountains.

LETTER LV.

[A. U. 706.]

TO TREBONIUS *.

I READ your letter, but particularly the treatise that attended it†, with great pleasure. It was a pleasure, nevertheless, not without its alloy ; as I could not but regret that you should leave us at a time when you had thus inflamed my heart, I do not say with a stronger affection (for that could admit of no increase), but with a more ardent desire of enjoying your company. My single consolation arises from the hope that we shall endeavour to alleviate the pain of this absence by a mutual exchange of long and frequent letters. Whilst I promise this on my part, I assure myself of the same on yours ; as, indeed, you have left me no room to doubt, how highly I stand in your regard. Need I mention those public instances I formerly received of your friendship, when you shewed the world that you considered my enemies as your own ; when you stood forth my generous advocate, in the assemblies of the people ; when you acted with that spirit which the consuls ought to have shewn, in maintaining the cause of liberty, by supporting mine ; and, though only a quæstor,

* He was tribune in the year of Rome 698, at which time he distinguished himself by being the principal promoter of those unconstitutional grants that were made by the people to Pompey, Cæsar, and Crassus, for the enlargement of their power and dignities.

† A collection of Cicero's *bon mots*.

yet refused to submit to the superior authority of a tribune, whilst your colleague, at the same time, meanly yielded to his measures? Need I mention (what I shall always, however, most gratefully remember) the more recent instances of your regard to me, in the solicitude you expressed for my safety when I engaged in the late war; in the joy you shewed when I returned into Italy*; in your friendly participation of all those cares and disquietudes with which I was at that time oppressed; and, in a word, in your kind intent of visiting me at Brundisium†, if you had not been suddenly ordered into Spain? To omit, I say, these various and inestimable proofs of your friendship; is not the treatise you have now sent me, a most conspicuous evidence of the share I enjoy in your heart? It is so, indeed, in a double view; and not only as you are so partial as to be the constant, and, perhaps, single, admirer of my wit, but as you have placed it likewise in so advantageous a light, as to render it, whatever it may be in itself, extremely agreeable. The truth of it is, your manner of relating my pleasantries is not less humorous than the conceits you celebrate, and half the reader's mirth is exhausted ere he arrives at my joke. In short, if I had no other obligation to you for making this collection, than your having suffered me to be so long present to your thoughts, I should be utterly insensible if it were not to impress upon me the most affectionate sentiments.—When I consider, indeed, that no-

* After the battle of Pharsalia.

† When he was waiting the arrival of Cæsar.

thing but the warmest attachment could have engaged you in such a work, I cannot suppose any man to have a greater regard for himself, than you have thus discovered for me. I wish it may be in my power to make you as ample a return in every other instance, as I most certainly do in the affection of my heart; a return, with which I trust, however, you will be perfectly well satisfied.

But to return from your performance, to your very agreeable letter: full as it was, I may yet answer it in few words. Let me assure you then, in the first place, that I no more imagined the letter which I sent to Calvus* would be made public, than I suspect that this will; and you are sensible that a letter designed to go no farther than the hand to which it is addressed, is written in a very different manner from one intended for general inspection. But you think, it seems, that I have spoken in higher terms of his abilities, than truth will justify. It was my real opinion, however, that he possessed a great genius, and, notwithstanding that he misapplied it by a wrong choice of that particular species of eloquence which he adopted, yet he certainly discovered great judgment in his execution. In a word, his compositions were marked with a vein of uncommon erudition, but they wanted a certain strength and spirit of colouring to render them perfectly finished. It was the attainment, therefore, of this quality that I endeavoured to recommend to his pursuit; and the seasoning of advice with ap-

* A very celebrated orator; who, though not much above thirty when he died (which was a short time before this letter was written), yet left behind him a large collection of orations.

plause, has a wonderful efficacy in firing the genius and animating the efforts of those one wishes to persuade. This was the true motive of the praises I bestowed upon Calvus, of whose talents I really had a very high opinion.

I have only farther to assure you, that my affectionate wishes attend you in your journey; that I shall impatiently expect your return; that I shall faithfully preserve you in my remembrance; and that I shall soothe the uneasiness of your absence, by keeping up this epistolary commerce. Let me entreat you to reflect, on your part, on the many and great good offices I have received at your hands; and which, though *you* may forget, I never can, without being guilty of a most unpardonable ingratitude. It is impossible, indeed, you should reflect on the obligations you have conferred upon me, without believing, not only that I have some merit, but that I think of you with the highest esteem and affection. Farewel.

LETTER LV.

[A: U. 707.]

TO LUCIUS MESCINIUS.

YOUR letter afforded me great pleasure, as it gave me an assurance (though indeed I wanted none) that you earnestly wish for my company. Believe me, I am equally desirous of yours: and, in truth, when there was a much greater abundance of patriot citizens and agreeable companions, who were in the number of my friends, there was no

man with whom I rather chose to associate, and few whose company I liked so well. But now that death, absence, or change of disposition has so greatly contracted this social circle, I should prefer a single day with you, to a whole life with the generality of those with whom I am at present obliged to live*. Solicitude itself, indeed, (if solitude, alas! I were at liberty to enjoy) would be far more eligible, than the conversation of those who frequent my house; one or two of them at most excepted. I seek my relief, therefore, (where I would advise you to look for yours) in amusements of a literary kind, and in the consciousness of having always intended well to my country. I have the satisfaction to reflect (as I dare say you will readily believe), that I never sacrificed the public good to my own private views; that if a certain person (whom for my sake, I am sure, you never loved) had not looked upon me with a jealous eye†, both himself and every friend to liberty had been happy; that I always endeavoured that it should not be in the power of any man to disturb the public tranquillity; and, in a word, that when I perceived those arms, which I had ever dreaded, would prove an overmatch for that patriot-coalition I had myself formed in the republic, I thought it better to

* The chiefs of the Cæsarean party; with whom Cicero now found it convenient to cultivate a friendship, in order to ingratiate himself with Cæsar.

† Pompey. who, being jealous of the popularity which Cicero had acquired during his consulship, struck in with the designs of Cæsar, and others, who had formed a party against our author.

accept of a safe peace upon any terms, than impotently to contend with a superior force. But I hope shortly to talk over these and many other points with you in person. Nothing, indeed, detains me in Rome, but to wait the event of the war in Africa: which, I imagine, must now be soon decided. And though it seems of little importance on which side the victory shall turn; yet I think it may be of some advantage to be near my friends when the news shall arrive, in order to consult with them on the measures it may be advisable for me to pursue. Affairs are now reduced to such an unhappy situation, that though there is a considerable difference, it is true, between the cause of the contending parties, I believe there will be very little as to the consequence of their success. However, though my spirits were too much dejected, perhaps, whilst our affairs remained in suspense; I find myself much more composed now that they are utterly desperate. Your last letter has contributed to confirm me in this disposition; as it is an instance of the magnanimity with which you support your unjust disgrace*. It is with particular satisfaction I observe, that you owe this heroic calmness, not only to philosophy, but to temper. For I will confess, that I imagined your mind was softened with that too delicate sensibility, which we, who passed our lives in the ease and freedom of Rome, were apt in general to contract. But as we bore our prosperous days with moderation, it becomes

* Mescinius, it is probable, was banished by Cæsar, as a partisan of Pompey, to a certain distance from Rome.

us to bear our adverse fortune, or more properly, indeed, our irretrievable ruin, with fortitude. This advantage we may at least derive from our extreme calamities; that they will teach us to look upon death with contempt: which, even if we were happy, we ought to despise, as a state of total insensibility; but which, under our present afflictions, should be the object of our constant wishes. Let not any fears then, I conjure you by your affection for me, disturb the peace of your retirement: and be well persuaded, nothing can befall a man that deserves to raise his dread and horror, but (what I am sure ever was, and ever will be, far from you) the reproaches of a guilty heart.

I purpose to pay you a visit very soon, if nothing should happen to make it necessary for me to change my resolution; and, if there should, I will immediately let you know. But I hope you will not, whilst you are in so weak a condition, be tempted, by your impatience of seeing me, to remove from your present situation: at least, not without previously consulting me. In the mean time, continue to love me; and take care both of your health and your repose. Farewel.

LETTER LVI.

[A. U. 707.]

TO VARRO.

THOUGH I have nothing to write, yet I could not suffer Caninius to pay you a visit, without taking the opportunity of conveying a letter by his hands.

And now I know not what else to say, but that I propose to be with you very soon: an information, however, which I am persuaded you will be glad to receive. But will it be altogether decent to appear in so gay a scene*, at a time when Rome is in such a general flame? And shall we not furnish an occasion of censure to those, who do not know that we observe the same sober philosophical life, in all seasons, and in every place? Yet, after all, what imports it? since the world will talk of us in spite of our utmost caution. And, indeed, whilst our censurers are immersed in every kind of flagitious debauchery; it is much worth our concern, truly, what they say of our innocent relaxations. In just contempt, therefore, of these illiterate barbarians, it is my resolution to join you very speedily. I know not how it is, indeed, but it should seem that our favorite studies are attended with much greater advantages in these wretched times than formerly: whether it be that they are now our only resource; or that we were less sensible of their salutary effects, when we were in too happy a state to have occasion to experience them. But this is sending owls to Athens†, as we say; and suggesting reflections which your own mind will far better supply. All

* Varro seems to have requested Cicero to give him a meeting at Baiæ, a place much frequented by the Romans on account of its hot baths; as the agreeableness of its situation on the Bay of Naples, rendered it at the same time the general resort of the pleasurable world.

† A proverbial expression of the same import with that of "sending coals to Newcastle." It alludes to the Athenian coin, which was stamped with the figure of an owl.

that I mean by them, however, is, to draw a letter from you in return, at the same time that I give you notice to expect me soon. Farewel.

LETTER LVII.

[A. U. 707.]

TO VARRO.

OUR friend Caninius paid me a visit, some time ago, very late in the evening, and informed me that he purposed to set out for your house the next morning. I told him I would give him two or three lines to deliver to you, and desired he would call for them in the morning. Accordingly I wrote to you that night*; but as he did not return, I imagined he had forgotten his promise; and should, therefore, have sent that letter by one of my own domestics, if Caninius had not assured me of your intention to leave Tusculum the next morning. However, after a few days had intervened, and I had given over all expectations of Caninius, he made me a second visit, and acquainted me that he was instantly setting out to you. But, notwithstanding the letter I had written was then become altogether out of date, especially after the arrival of such important news†; yet, as I was unwilling that any of my profound lucubrations should be lost, I delivered it into the hands of that very learned and affec-

* Probably the preceding letter.

† Concerning Cæsar's defeat of Scipio in Africa.

tionate friend of yours : who, I suppose, has acquainted you with the conversation which passed between us at the same time.

I think it most prudent for both of us to avoid the view, at least, if we cannot so easily escape the remarks, of the world. For those who are elevated with this victory, look down upon us with an air of triumph; and those who regret it, are displeased that we did not sacrifice our lives in the cause. But you will ask, perhaps, (as it is in Rome that we are particularly exposed to these mortifications) why I have not followed your example in retiring from the city? But tell me, my friend, superior as your judgment confessedly is, did you never find yourself mistaken? Or who is there, in times of such total darkness and confusion, that can always be sure of directing his steps aright? I have long thought, indeed, that it would be happy for me to retire where I might neither see, nor hear, what passes in Rome. But my groundless suspicions discouraged me from executing this scheme : as I was apprehensive that those who might accidentally meet me on my way, would put such constructions upon my retreat, as best suited with their own purposes. Some, I imagined, would suspect, or at least pretend to suspect, that I was either driven from Rome by my fears, or withdrew in order to form some revolution abroad ; and, perhaps, too, would report, that I had actually provided a ship for that purpose. Others, I feared, who knew me best, and might be disposed to think most favourably of my actions, would be apt to impute my recess to an

abhorrence of a certain party*. It is these apprehensions that have hitherto, contrary to my inclinations indeed, detained me in Rome: but custom, however, has familiarized the unpleasing scene, and gradually hardened me into a less exquisite sensibility.

Thus I have laid before you the motives which induce me to continue here. As to what relates to your own conduct; I would advise you to remain in your present retirement, till the warmth of our public exultation shall be somewhat abated, and it shall certainly be known in what manner affairs abroad are terminated: for terminated, I am well persuaded, they are †. Much will depend on the general result of this battle, and the temper in which Cæsar may return. And though I see, already, what is abundantly sufficient to determine my sentiments as to that point, yet I think it most advisable to wait the event. In the mean time, I should be glad you would postpone your journey to Baiæ, till the first transports of this clamorous joy is subsided: as it will have a better appearance to meet you at those waters, when I may seem to go thither rather to join with you in lamenting the public misfortunes, than to participate in the pleasures of the place. But this I submit to your more enlightened judgment: only let us agree to pass our lives together in those studies, which were once, indeed, nothing more than our amusement, but must now, alas! prove

* The Cæsareans.

† When this letter was written, there seem to have been only some general accounts arrived of Cæsar's success in Africa; but the particulars of the battle were not yet known.

our principal support. Let us be ready, at the same time, whenever we shall be called upon, to contribute not only our councils, but our labours, in repairing the ruins of the republic. But if none shall require our services for this purpose, let us employ our time and our thoughts upon moral and political inquiries. If we cannot benefit the commonwealth in the forum and the senate; let us endeavour, at least, to do so by our studies and our writings: and, after the example of the most learned among the ancients, contribute to the welfare of our country, by useful disquisitions concerning laws and government.

And now, having thus acquainted you with my sentiments and purposes, I shall be extremely obliged to you for letting me know your's in return. Farewel.

LETTER LVIII.

[A. U. 707.]

TO VARRO.

OUR friend Caninius acquainted me with your request that I would write to you whenever there was any news which I thought it concerned you to know. You are already informed that we are in daily expectation of Cæsar*; but I am now to tell you that, as it was his intention, it seems, to

* Cæsar returned victorious from Africa, about the 26th of July, in the present year; so that this letter was probably written either in the beginning of that month, or the latter end of June.

have landed at Alsium*, his friends have written to dissuade him from that design. They think that his coming on shore at that place will prove extremely troublesome to himself, as well as very much incommode many others; and have therefore recommended Ostia† as a more convenient port. For my own part, I can see no difference. Hirtius‡, however, assures me, that himself, as well as Balbus and Oppius (who, let me observe by the way, are every one of them greatly in your interest), have written to Cæsar for this purpose. I thought proper, therefore, to send you this piece of intelligence for two reasons. In the first place, that you might know where to engage a lodging; or rather, that you might secure one in both these towns; for it is extremely uncertain at which of them Cæsar will disembark. And in the next place, in order to indulge a little piece of vanity, by shewing you that I am so well with these favourites of Cæsar, as to be admitted into their privy council. To speak seriously, I see no reason to decline their friendship: for, surely, there is a wide difference between submitting to evils we cannot remedy, and approving measures that we ought to condemn. Though, to confess the truth, I do not know there are any that I can

* The situation of this place is not exactly known: some geographers suppose it to be the same town which is now called *Serera*, a sea-port about twenty-five miles from Rome, on the western coast of Italy.

† It still retains its ancient name, and is situated at the mouth of the Tiber.

‡ He lived in great intimacy with Cæsar, and had served under him in quality of one of his lieutenants in Gaul.

justly blame, except those which involved us in the civil wars; for these, it must be owned, were altogether voluntary. I saw, indeed, (what your distance from Rome prevented you from observing*) that our party were eager for war; while Cæsar, on the contrary, appeared less inclined than afraid to have recourse to arms. Thus far, therefore, our calamities might have been prevented; but all beyond was unavoidable; for one side or the other must necessarily prove superior. Now we both of us, I am sure, always lamented those infinite mischiefs that would ensue, whichever general of the two contending armies should happen to fall in battle; as we were well convinced, that of all the complicated evils which attend a civil war, victory is the supreme. I dreaded it, indeed, even on that side which both you and I thought proper to join, as they threatened most cruel vengeance on those who stood neuter; and were no less offended at your sentiments than at my speeches. But had they gained this last battle, we should still more severely have experienced the effects of their power, as our late conduct had incensed them to the highest degree. Yet what measures have we taken for our own security, that we did not warmly recommend for their's? And how have they more advantaged the republic by having recourse to Juba and his elephants†, than if they had perished by their

* Varro, at the breaking out of the civil war, was in Spain: where he resided in quality of one of Pompey's lieutenants.

† These elephants were drawn up in the front of the right and left wing of Scipio's army. But being driven back upon the line behind them, they put the ranks into

own swords, or submitted to live under the present system of affairs, with some hopes, at least, if not with the fairest. But they may tell us, perhaps, (and, indeed, with truth) that the government under which we have chosen to live, is altogether turbulent and unsettled. Let this objection, however, have weight with those who have treasured up no stores in their minds to support themselves under all the possible vicissitudes of human affairs; a reflection which brings me round to what I principally had in view, when I undesignedly wandered into this long digression. I was going to have said, that as I always looked upon your character with great admiration, so nothing raises it higher in my esteem, than to observe that you are almost the only person, in these tempestuous days, who has wisely retreated into harbour, and are enjoying the happy fruits of those important studies which are attended with more public advantage, as well as private satisfaction, than all the ambitious exploits, or voluptuous indulgencies, of these licentious victors. The contemplative hours you spend at your Tusculan villa, are, in my estimation, indeed, what alone deserve to be called life; and I would willingly renounce the whole wealth and splendour of the world, to be at liberty to pass my time in the same philosophical manner. I follow your example, however, as far as the circumstances in which I am placed will permit, and have recourse, with great satisfaction of mind, to my favourite

great confusion, and, instead of proving of any advantage to Scipio, contributed to facilitate his defeat.

studies. Since our country, indeed, either cannot or will not accept our services, who shall condemn us for returning to that contemplative privacy which many philosophers have thought preferable (I will not say with reason, however, they have preferred) even to the most public and patriot labours? And why should we not indulge ourselves in those learned inquiries, which some of the greatest men have deemed a just dispensation from all public employments; when it is a liberty, at the same time, which the commonwealth itself is willing to allow us? But I am going beyond the commission which Caninius gave me; and while he only desired that I would acquaint you with those articles of which you were not already apprized, I am telling you what you know far better than I can inform you. For the future I shall confine myself more strictly to your request, and will not fail of communicating to you whatever intelligence I may learn, which I shall think it imports you to know. Farewel.

LETTER LIX.

[A. U. 707.]

TO VOLUMNIUS.

You have little reason, believe me, to regret the not being present at my declamations: and if you should really envy Hirtius, as you assure me you should if you did not love him, it must be much more for his own eloquence, than as he is an auditor of mine. In truth, my dear Volumnius, either

I am utterly void of all genius, or incapable of exercising it to my satisfaction, now that I have lost those illustrious fellow-labourers at the bar, that fired me with emulation when I used to gain your judicious applause. If ever, indeed, I displayed the powers of eloquence with advantage to my reputation, let me send a sigh when I reflect, with the fallen Philoctetes in the play, that

These potent shafts, the heroes' wonted dread,
Now spend on meaner war their idle force;
Aim'd at the wing'd inhabitants of air!

However, if you will give me your company here, my spirits will be more enlivened: though I need not add, that you will find me engaged in a multitude of very important occupations. But if I can once get to the end of them (as I most earnestly wish), I shall bid a long farewell both to the forum and the senate, and chiefly devote my time to you and some few others of our common friends. In this number are Cassius and Dolabella, who are united with us in the same favourite studies, and to whose performances I with great pleasure attend. But we want the assistance of your refined judgment, and of that uncommon erudition which has often struck me with awe when I have been delivering my sentiments before you. I have determined, then, if I should obtain the consent, or at least the permission, of Cæsar, to retire from that stage on which I have frequently performed a part that he himself has applauded. It is my resolution, indeed, totally to conceal myself in the secret shades of philosophy, where I hope to enjoy, with you, and some others

of the same contemplative disposition, the honourable fruits of a studious leisure.

I am sorry you shortened your last letter in the apprehension that I should not have patience to read a longer. But assure yourself, for the future, that the longer yours are, the more acceptable they will always prove to me. Farewel.

LETTER LX.

[A. U. 707.]

TO PAPIRIUS PÆTUS.

YOUR letter gave me a double pleasure; for it not only diverted me extremely, but was a proof likewise, that you are so well recovered as to be able to indulge your usual gaiety. I was well contented, at the same time, to find myself the subject of your raillery; and, in truth, the repeated provocations I had given you were sufficient to call forth all the severity of your satire. My only regret is, that I am prevented from taking my intended journey into your part of the world, where I purposed to have made myself, I do not say your guest, but one of your family. You would have found me wonderfully changed from the man I formerly was, when you used to cram me with your cloying antepasts*. For I now more pru-

* These antepasts seem to have been a kind of collation preparatory to the principal entertainment. They generally consisted, it is probable, of such dishes as were provocatives to appetite; but prudent economists, as may be collected from the turn of Cicero's raillery, sometimes contrived them in such a manner as to damp rather than improve the stomach of their guests.

dently sit down to table with an appetite altogether unimpaired, and most heroically make my way through every dish that comes before me, from the egg * that leads the van, to the roast veal that brings up the rear†. The temperate and unexpensive guest whom you were wont to applaud, is now no more. I have bidden a total farewell to all the cares of the patriot, and have joined the professed enemies of my former principles ; in short, I am become an absolute Epicurean. You are by no means, however, to consider me as a friend to that injudicious profusion, which is now the prevailing taste of our modern entertainments ; on the contrary, it is that more elegant luxury I admire which you formerly used to display when your finances were most flourishing, though your farms were not more numerous than at present. Be prepared, therefore, for my reception accordingly ; and remember you are to entertain a man who has not only a most enormous appetite, but who has some little knowledge, let me tell you, in the science of elegant eating. You know there is a peculiar air of self-sufficiency, that generally distinguishes those who enter late into the study of any art. You will not wonder, therefore, when I take upon me to inform you, that you must banish your cakes and your sweetmeats, as articles that are now utterly dis-

* The first dish, at every Roman table, was constantly eggs ; which maintained their post of honour even at the most magnificent entertainments.

† It appears, by a passage which Manutius cites from Tertullian, that the Romans usually concluded their feasts with broiled or roasted meat.

carded from all fashionable bills of fare. I am become, indeed, such a proficient in this science, that I frequently venture to invite to my table those refined friends of yours, the delicate Verrius and Camillus. Nay, I am bolder still, and have presumed to give a supper even to Hirtius himself; though, I must own, I could not advance so far as to honour him with a peacock. To tell you the truth, my honest cook had not skill enough to imitate any other part of his splendid entertainments, except only his smoking soups.

But to give you a general sketch of my manner of life: I spend the first part of the morning in receiving the compliments of several both of our dejected patriots and our gay victors; the latter of whom treat me with great marks of civility and esteem. As soon as that ceremony is over, I retire to my library, where I employ myself either with my books or my pen. And here I am sometimes surrounded by an audience, who look upon me as a man of most profound erudition, for no other reason, perhaps, than because I am not altogether so ignorant as themselves. The rest of my time I wholly devote to indulgencies of a less intellectual kind. I have sufficiently, indeed, paid the tribute of sorrow to my unhappy country; the miseries whereof I have longer and more bitterly lamented, than ever tender mother bewailed the loss of her only son.

Let me desire you, as you would secure your magazine of provisions from falling into my hands, to take care of your health; for I have most unmercifully resolved that no pretence of indisposition shall preserve your larder from my depredations. Farewel.

LETTER LXI.

[A. U. 708.]

TO CÆSAR.

I VERY particularly recommend to your favour the son of our worthy and common friend Præcilius, a youth whose modest and polite behaviour, together with his singular attachment to myself, have exceedingly endeared him to me. His father, likewise, as experience has now fully convinced me, was always my most sincere well-wisher. For, to confess the truth, he was the first and most zealous of those who used both to rally and reproach me for not joining in your cause, especially after you had invited me by so many honourable overtures. But,

All unavailing prov'd his every art,
To shake the purpose of my stedfast heart *.

For whilst the gallant chiefs of our party were on the other side perpetually exclaiming to me,

“ Rise thou, distinguish'd midst the sons of Fame,
And fair transmit to times unborn thy name †”
Too easy dupe of Flattery's specious voice,
Darkling I stray'd from Wisdom's better choice ‡.

And fain would they still raise my spirits, while they endeavour, insensible as I now am to the charms of glory, to re-kindle that passion in my heart. With this view they are ever repeating,

* Hom. *Odyss.* vii. 258.

§ Hom. *Odyss.* i. 302.

† Hom. *Odyss.* xxiv. 311.

O let me not inglorious sink in death,
And yield like vulgar souls my parting breath;
In some brave effort give me to expire,
That distant ages may the deed admire *!

But I am immoveable, as you see, by all their persuasions. Renouncing, therefore, the pompous heroics of Homer, I turn to the just maxims of Euripides, and say, with that poet,

Curse on the sage, who, impotently wise,
O'erlooks the paths where humbler prudence lies.

My old friend, Præcilius is a great admirer of the sentiment in these lines; insisting that a patriot may preserve a prudential regard to his own safety, and yet,

Above his peers the first in honour shine †.

But to return from this digression: you will greatly oblige me by extending to this young man that uncommon generosity which so peculiarly marks your character, and by suffering my recommendation to increase the number of those favours which I am persuaded you are disposed to confer upon him for the sake of his family.

I have not addressed you in the usual style of recommendatory letters, that you might see I did not intend this as an application of common form. Farewel.

* Hóm. Il. xxii.

† Hom. Il. vi. 205.

LETTER LXII.

[A. U. 708.]

TO THE SAME.

AMONGST all our young nobility, Publius Crassus was one for whom I entertained the highest regard ; and, indeed, he amply justified, in his more mature years, the favourable opinion I had conceived of him from his infancy. It was during his life that his freedman Apollonius first recommended himself to my esteem. For he was zealously attached to the interest of his patron, and perfectly well qualified to assist him in those noble studies to which he was devoted. Accordingly, Crassus was extremely fond of him. But Apollonius, after the death of his patron, proved himself still more worthy of my protection and friendship, as he distinguished, with peculiar marks of respect, all who loved Crassus, or had been beloved by him. It was this that induced Apollonius to follow me into Cilicia : where, upon many occasions, I received singular advantage from his faithful and judicious services. If I mistake not, his most sincere and zealous offices were not wanting to you likewise in the Alexandrine war, and it is in the hope of your thinking so, that he has resolved, in concurrence with my sentiments, but chiefly, indeed, from his own, to wait upon you in Spain. I would not promise, however, to recommend him to your favour. Not that I suspected my applications would be void of weight,

but I thought they would be unnecessary in behalf of a man who had served in the army under you, and whom, from your regard to the memory of Crassus, you would undoubtedly consider as a friend of your own. Besides, I knew he could easily procure letters of this kind from many other hands. But, as he greatly values my good opinion, and as I am sensible it has some influence upon yours, I very willingly give him my testimonial. Let me assure you, then, that I know him to be a man of literature, and one who has applied himself to the polite arts from his earliest youth. For when he was a boy, he frequently visited at my house with Diodotus, the Stoic: a philosopher, in my judgment, of consummate erudition. Apollonius, inflamed with zeal for the glory of your actions, is greatly desirous of recording them in Greek, and I think him very capable of the undertaking. He has an excellent genius, and has been particularly conversant in studies of the historical kind, and he is wonderfully ambitious, likewise, of doing justice to your immortal fame. These are my sincere sentiments of the man; but how far he deserves them, your own superior judgment will best determine. But though I told Apollonius that I should not particularly recommend him to your favour, yet I cannot forbear assuring you, that every instance of your generosity towards him will extremely oblige me. Farewel.

LETTER LXIII.

[A. U. 708.]

QUINTUS CICERO TO MARCUS CICERO.

I PROTEST to you, my dear brother, you have performed an act extremely agreeable to me, in giving Tiro his freedom ; as a state of servitude was a situation far unworthy of his merit. Believe me, I felt the highest complacency, when I found, by his letter and yours, that you rather chose we should look upon him in the number of our friends, than in that of our slaves ; and I both congratulate and thank you for this instance of your generosity towards him. If I receive so much satisfaction from the services of my freedman, Statius, how much more valuable must the same good qualities appear in Tiro, as they have the additional advantages of his learning, his wit, and his politeness to recommend them ? I have many powerful motives for the affection I bear you ; and this mark of your beneficence to Tiro, together with your giving me part (as, indeed, you had reason) in the family joy upon this occasion, still increases the number. In a word, I saw and admired all the amiable qualities of your heart, in the letter you wrote to me on this subject.

I have promised my best services to the slaves of Sabinus ; and it is a promise I will most assuredly make good. Farewel.

LETTER LXIV.

[A. U. 708.]

TO DOLABELLA*.

OH! that the silence you so kindly regret had been occasioned by my own death, rather than by the severe loss † I have suffered: a loss I should be better able to support, if I had you with me: for your judicious counsels, and singular affection towards me, would greatly contribute to alleviate its weight. This good office, indeed, I may yet, perhaps, receive; for, as I imagine we shall soon see you here, you will find me still so deeply affected, as to have an opportunity of affording me great assistance: not that this affliction has so broken my spirit, as to render me unmindful that I am a man, or apprehensive that I must totally sink under its pressure. But all that cheerfulness and vivacity of temper, which you once so particularly admired, has now, alas! entirely forsaken me. My fortitude and resolution, nevertheless, (if these virtues were ever mine) I still retain; and retain them too in the same vigour as when you left me.

As to those battles which, you tell me, you have sustained upon my account, I am far less solicitous that you should confute my detractors, than that the world should know (as it unquestionably does) that I enjoy a place in your affection; and may

* He was at this time with Cæsar in Spain.

† The death of his daughter Tullia.

you still continue to render that truth conspicuous. To this request I will add another, and entreat you to excuse me for not sending you a longer letter. I shorten it, not only as imagining we shall soon meet, but because my mind is at present by no means sufficiently composed for writing. Farewel.

LETTER LXV.

[A. U. 705.]

SERVIUS SULPICIUS TO CICERO.

I RECEIVED the news of your daughter's death, with all the concern it so justly deserves; and, indeed, I cannot but consider it as a misfortune in which I bear an equal share with yourself. If I had been near you when this fatal accident happened, I should not only have mingled my tears with yours, but assisted you with all the consolation in my power. I am sensible, at the same time, that offices of this kind afford, at best, but a wretched relief: for as none are qualified to perform them, but those who stand near to us, by the ties either of blood or affection, such persons are generally too much afflicted themselves, to be capable of administering comfort to others.—Nevertheless, I thought proper to suggest a few reflections which occurred to me upon this occasion: not as imagining they would be new to you, but believing that, in your present discomposure of mind, they might possibly have escaped your attention. Tell me then, my friend, wherefore

do you indulge this excess of sorrow? Reflect, I entreat you, in what manner fortune has dealt with every one of us; that she has deprived us of what ought to be no less dear than our children, and overwhelmed, in one general ruin, our honours, our liberties, and our country. And, after these losses, is it possible that any other should increase our tears? Is it possible that a mind long exercised in calamities so truly severe should not become totally callous and indifferent to every event? But you will tell me, perhaps, that your grief arises not so much on your own account, as on that of Tullia. Yet, surely, you must often, as well as myself, have had occasion, in these wretched times, to reflect, that their condition by no means deserves to be regretted, whom death has gently removed from this unhappy scene. What is there, let me ask, in the present circumstances of our country, that could have rendered life greatly desirable to your daughter? What pleasing hopes, what agreeable views, what rational satisfaction could she possibly have proposed to herself, from a more extended period? Was it in the prospect of conjugal happiness in the society of some distinguished youth? as if, indeed, you could have found a son-in-law, amongst our present set of young men, worthy of being entrusted with the care of your daughter! Or was it in the expectation of being the joyful mother of a flourishing race, who might possess their patrimony with independence, who might gradually rise through the several dignities of the state, and exert the liberty to which they were born in the service and defence of their friends

and country? But is there one amongst all these desirable privileges, of which we were not deprived, before she was in a capacity of transmitting them to her descendants? Yet, after all, you may still allege, perhaps, that the loss of our children is a severe affliction; and unquestionably it would be so, if it were not a much greater to see them live to endure those indignities which their parents suffer.

I lately fell into a reflection, which, as it afforded great relief to the disquietude of my own heart, it may possibly contribute, likewise, to assuage the anguish of yours. In my return out of Asia, as I was sailing from Ægina towards Megara*, I amused myself with contemplating the circumjacent countries. Behind me lay Ægina, before me Megara; on my right I saw Piræeust†, and on my left Corinth‡. These cities, once so flourishing and magnificent, now presented nothing to my view but a sad spectacle of desolation. “Alas,” I said to myself, “shall such a short-lived creature as man complain, when one of his species falls either by the hand of violence, or by the common course of nature; whilst in this narrow compass, so many great and glorious cities, formed for a much longer duration, thus lie extended in ruins? Remember, then, oh my heart! the general lot to which man is born, and let that thought sup-

* Ægina, now called Engia, is an island situated in the gulf that runs between the Peloponnesus and Attica, to which it gives its name. Magara was a city near the isthmus of Corinth.

† A celebrated sea-port at a small distance from Athens, now called Port-Lion.

‡ A city in the Peloponnesus;

press thy unreasonable murmurs." Believe me, I found my mind greatly refreshed and comforted by these reflections. Let me advise you, in the same manner, to represent to yourself, what numbers of our illustrious countrymen have lately been cut off at once*, how much the strength of the Roman republic is impaired, and what dreadful devastation has gone forth throughout all its provinces! And can you, with the impression of these greater calamities upon your mind, be so immoderately afflicted for the loss of a single individual, a poor, little, tender woman? who, if she had not died at this time, must, in a few fleeting years more, have inevitably undergone that common fate to which she was born.

Reasonable, however, as these reflections are, I would call you from them awhile, in order to lead your thoughts to others more peculiarly suitable to your circumstances and character. Remember, then, that your daughter lived as long as life was worth possessing, that is, till liberty was no more; that she lived to see you in the illustrious offices of prætor, consul, and augur; to be married to some of the noblest youths in Rome †; to be blessed with almost every valuable enjoyment; and, at length, to expire with the republic itself. Tell me, now, what is there in this view of her fate, that could give either her or yourself just reason to complain? In fine, do not forget that you are Cicero; the wise, the philosophical Cicero, who were wont to give advice to others;

* In the civil wars.

† To Piso, Crassipes, and Dolabella.

nor resemble those unskilful empirics, who, at the same time that they pretend to be furnished with remedies for other men's disorders, are altogether incapable of finding a cure for their own. On the contrary, apply to your private use those judicious precepts you have administered to the public. Time necessarily weakens the strongest impressions of sorrow; but it would be a reproach to your character not to anticipate this its certain effect, by the force of your own good sense and judgment. If the dead retain any consciousness of what is here transacted, your daughter's affection, I am sure, was such, both to you and to all her relations, that she can by no means desire you should abandon yourself to this excess of grief. Restrain it then, I conjure you, for her sake, and for the sake of the rest of your family and friends, who lament to see you thus afflicted. Restrain it too, I beseech you, for the sake of your country; that, whenever the opportunity shall serve, it may reap the benefit of your counsels and assistance. In short, since such is our fortune, that we must necessarily submit to the present system of public affairs, suffer it not to be suspected, that it is not so much the death of your daughter, as the fate of the republic, and the success of our victors, that you deplore.

But it would be ill-manners to dwell any longer upon this subject, as I should seem to question the efficacy of your own good sense. I will only add, therefore, that as we have often seen you bear prosperity in the noblest manner, and with the highest applause, shew us, likewise, that you are not too sensible of adversity, but know how to

support it with the same advantage to your character. In a word, let it not be said, that fortitude is the single virtue to which my friend is a stranger.

As for what concerns myself, I will send you an account of the state of this province, and of what is transacting in this part of the world, as soon as I shall hear that you are sufficiently composed to receive the information. Farewel.

LETTER LXVI.

[A. U. 705.]

TO SERVIUS SULPICIUS.

I JOIN with you, my dear Sulpicius, in wishing that you had been in Rome when this most severe calamity befel me. I am sensible of the advantage I should have received from your presence, and I had almost said your equal participation of my grief, by having found myself somewhat more composed after I had read your letter. It furnished me, indeed, with arguments extremely proper to sooth the anguish of affliction, and evidently flowed from a heart that sympathized with the sorrows it endeavoured to assuage. But, although I could not enjoy the benefit of your own good offices in person, I had the advantage, however, of your son's, who gave me a proof, by every tender assistance that could be contributed upon so melancholy an occasion, how much he imagined that he was acting agreeably to your sentiments, when he thus discovered the affection of his own.

More pleasing instances of his friendship I have frequently received, but never any that were more obliging. As to those for which I am indebted to yourself, it is not only the force of your reasonings, and the very considerable share you take in my afflictions, that have contributed to compose my mind; it is the deference, likewise, which I always pay to the authority of your sentiments. For, knowing, as I perfectly do, the superior wisdom with which you are enlightened, I should be ashamed not to support my distresses in the manner you think I ought. I will acknowledge, nevertheless, that they sometimes almost entirely overcome; and I am scarcely able to resist the force of my grief when I reflect, that I am destitute of those consolations which attended others, whose examples I propose to my imitation. Thus Quintus Maximus lost a son of consular rank, and distinguished by many brave and illustrious actions; Lucius Paulus was deprived of two sons in the space of a single week; and your relation Gallus, together with Marcus Cato, had both of them the unhappiness to survive their respective sons, who were endowed with the highest abilities and virtues. Yet these unfortunate parents lived in times when the honours they derived from the republic might, in some measure, alleviate the weight of their domestic misfortunes. But, as for myself, after having been stripped of those dignities you mention, and which I had acquired by the most laborious exertion of my abilities, I had one only consolation remaining; and of that I am now bereaved! I could no longer divert the disquietude of my thoughts, by em-

ploying myself in the causes of my friends, or the business of the state; for I could no longer, with any satisfaction, appear either in the forum, or the senate. In short, I justly considered myself as cut off from the benefit of all those alleviating occupations in which fortune and industry had qualified me to engage. But I considered too, that this was a deprivation which I suffered in common with yourself, and some others; and, whilst I was endeavouring to reconcile my mind to a patient endurance of those ills, there was one to whose tender offices I could have recourse, and in the sweetness of whose conversation I could discharge all the cares and anxiety of my heart. But this last fatal stab to my peace has torn open those wounds which seemed in some measure to have been tolerably healed. For I can now no longer lose my private sorrows in the prosperity of the commonwealth, as I was wont to dispel the uneasiness I suffered upon the public account, in the happiness I received at home. Accordingly, I have equally banished myself from my house*, and from the public; as finding no relief in either, from the calamities I lament in both. It is this, therefore, that heightens my desire of seeing you here; as nothing can afford me a more effectual consolation than the renewal of our friendly intercourse: a happiness which I hope, and am informed, indeed, that I shall shortly enjoy. Among the many reasons I have for im-

* Cicero, upon the death of his daughter, retired from his own house, to one belonging to Atticus, near Rome; from which, perhaps, this letter was written.

patiently wishing your arrival, one is, that we may previously concert together our scheme of conduct in the present conjuncture; which, however, must now be entirely accommodated to another's will. 'This person*', it is true, is a man of great abilities and generosity; and one, if I mistake not, who is by no means my enemy; as I am sure he is extremely your friend. Nevertheless, it requires much consideration, I do not say in what manner we shall act with respect to public affairs, but by what methods we may best obtain his permission to retire from them. Farewel.

LETTER LXVII.

[A. U. 708.]

TO LUCIUS LUCCEIUS.

ALL the letters I have received from you, upon the subject of my late misfortune, were extremely acceptable to me, as instances of the highest affection and good sense. But the great advantage I have derived from them, principally results from that animating contempt with which you look down upon human affairs, and that exemplary fortitude which arms you against all the various assaults of fortune. I esteem it the most glorious privilege of philosophy, to be thus superior to external accidents, and to depend for happiness on ourselves alone; a sentiment, which, although it was too deeply planted in my heart to be totally eradicated, has been somewhat weakened,

* Cæsar.

I confess, by the violence of those repeated storms to which I have been lately exposed. But you have endeavoured, and with great success indeed, to restore it to all its usual strength and vigour. I cannot, therefore, either too often, or too strongly, assure you, that nothing could give me a higher satisfaction than your letter. But, powerful as the various arguments of consolation are which you have collected for my use, and elegantly as you have enforced them, I must acknowledge, that nothing proved more effectual than that firmness of mind which I remarked in your letters, and which I should esteem as the utmost reproach not to imitate. But if I imitate, I must necessarily excel my guide and instructor in this lesson of fortitude; for I am altogether unsupported by the same hopes which I find you entertain, that public affairs will improve. Those illustrations, indeed, which you draw from the gladiatorial combats, together with the whole tendency of your reasoning in general, all concur in forbidding me to despair of the commonwealth. It would be nothing extraordinary, therefore, if you should be more composed than myself, whilst you are in possession of these pleasing hopes: the only wonder is, how you can possibly entertain any. For say, my friend, what is there of our constitution that is not utterly subverted? Look round the republic and tell me, (you who so well understand the nature of our government) what part of it remains unbroken or unimpaired? Most unquestionably there is not one; as I would prove in detail, if I imagined my own discernment was superior to yours, or were capable (notwithstanding all your powerful admonitions

and precepts) to dwell upon so melancholy a subject without being extremely affected. But I will bear my domestic misfortunes in the manner you assure me that I ought; and as to those of the public, I shall support them, perhaps, with greater equanimity than even my friend. For (to repeat it again) you are not, it seems, without some sort of hopes; whereas, for myself, I have absolutely none: and shall, therefore, in pursuance of your advice, preserve my spirits even in the midst of despair. The pleasing recollection of those actions you recal to my remembrance, and which, indeed, I performed chiefly by your encouragement and recommendation, will greatly contribute to this end. To say the truth, I have done every thing for the service of my country that I ought, and more than could have been expected from the courage and counsels of any man. You will pardon me, I hope, for speaking in this advantageous manner of my own conduct; but, as you advise me to alleviate my present uneasiness by a retrospect of my past actions, I will confess, that, in thus commemorating them, I find great consolation.

I shall punctually observe your admonitions, by calling off my mind as much as possible from every thing that may disturb its peace, and fixing it on those speculations which are at once an ornament to prosperity, and the support of adversity. For this purpose, I shall endeavour to spend as much of my time with you as our health and years will mutually permit: and if we cannot meet so often as I am sure we both wish, we shall always at least seem present to each other by a sympathy

of hearts, and an union in the same philosophical contemplations. Farewel.

LETTER LXVIII:

[A. U. 708.]

LUCCEIUS TO CICERO.

I SHALL rejoice to hear that you are well. As to my own health, it is much as usual; or rather, I think, somewhat worse.

I have frequently called at your door, and am much surprised to find that you have not been in Rome since Cæsar left it. What is it that so strongly draws you from hence? If any of your usual engagements of the literary kind renders you thus enamoured of solitude, I am so far from condemning your retirement, that I think of it with pleasure. There is no sort of life, indeed, that can be more agreeable, not only in times so disturbed as the present, but even in those of the most desirable calm and serenity: especially to a mind like yours, which may have occasion for repose from its public labours, and which is always capable of producing something that will afford both pleasure to others and honour to yourself. But if you have withdrawn from the world, in order to give a free vent to those tears which you so immoderately indulged when you were here, I shall lament, indeed, your grief: but (if you will allow me to speak the truth) I never can excuse it. For tell me, my friend, is it possible that a man of your uncommon discernment should not perceive what is obvious to all man-

kind? Is it possible you can be ignorant that your perpetual complaints can profit nothing, and only serve to increase those disquietudes which your good sense requires you to subdue? But if arguments cannot prevail, entreaties perhaps may. Let me conjure you, then, by all the regard you bear me, to dispel this gloom that hangs upon your heart; to return to that society and to those occupations which were either common to us both, or peculiar to yourself. But though I would fain dissuade you from continuing your present way of life, yet I would by no means suffer my zeal to be troublesome. In the difficulty, therefore, of steering between these two inclinations, I will only add my request, that you would either comply with my advice, or excuse me for offering it. Farewel.

LETTER LXIX.

[A. U. 707.]

TO LUCIUS LUCCEIUS.

EVERY part of your last letter glowed with that warmth of friendship, which, though it was by no means new to me, I could not but observe with peculiar satisfaction; I would say *pleasure*, if that were not a word to which I have now for ever bidden adieu. Not merely, however, for the cause you suspect, and for which, under the gentlest and most affectionate terms, you, in fact, very severely reproach me; but because all that ought in reason to assuage the anguish of so deep a wound is absolutely no more. For whither shall I fly for consolation? Is it to the bosom of my friends?

But tell me (for we have generally shared the same common amities together) how few of that number are remaining? how few that have not perished by the sword, or that are not become strangely insensible? You will say, perhaps, that I might seek my relief in your society: and there, indeed, I would willingly seek it. The same habits and studies, a long intercourse of friendship—in short, is there any sort of bond, any single circumstance of connexion, wanting to unite us together? Why then are we such strangers to one another? For my own part, I know not: but this I know, that we have hitherto seldom met, I do not say in Rome, where the forum usually brings every body together*, but when we were near neighbours at Tusculum and Puteolæ.

I know not by what ill fate it has happened, that, at an age when I might expect to flourish in the greatest credit and dignity, I should find myself in so wretched a situation as to be ashamed that I am still in being. Despoiled, indeed, of every honour, every comfort that adorned my public life, or solaced my private, what is it that can now afford me any refuge? My books, I imagine you will tell me: and to these, indeed, I very assiduously apply. For, to what else can I possibly have recourse? Yet even these seem to exclude me from that peaceful port which I fain would reach, and reproach me, as it were, for prolonging that life which only increases my sor-

* The forum was a place of general resort for the whole city. It was here that the lawyers pleaded their causes, that the poets recited their works, and that funeral orations were spoken in honour of the dead. It was here, in short, every thing was going forward, that could engage the active, or amuse the idle.

rows with my years. Can you wonder then that I absent myself from Rome, where there is nothing under my own roof to afford me any satisfaction, and where I abhor both public men and public measures, both the forum and the senate? For this reason it is that I wear away my days in a total application to literary pursuits: not, indeed, as entertaining so vain a hope, that I may find in them a complete cure for my misfortunes, but in order to obtain, at least, some little respite from their bitter remembrance.

If those dangers with which we were daily menaced, had not formerly prevented both you and myself from reflecting with that coolness we ought, we should never have been thus separated. Had that proved to have been the case, we should both of us have spared ourselves much uneasiness: as I should not have indulged so many groundless fears for your health, nor you for the consequences of my grief. Let us repair then this unlucky mistake as well as we may: and as nothing can be more suitable to both of us, than the company of each other, I purpose to be with you in a few days. Farewel.

LETTER LXX.

[A. U. 709.]

TO MARTIUS.

I KNOW not whether it is with greater pain or pleasure, that I reflect on the visit which I lately received from our very good friend, the well-natured Trebatius. He called upon me the next morning after my arrival at Tusculum: and as he

was by no means sufficiently recovered from his late indisposition, I could not forbear reproving him for thus hazarding his health. He interrupted me with saying, that nothing was of more importance to him than the business which brought him to my house: and, upon my inquiry if any thing new had occurred, he immediately entered into an account of your complaints against me. But before I give them a particular answer, let me begin with a few previous reflections.

Amongst all my acquaintance, I cannot recollect any man with whom I have longer enjoyed a friendship, than with yourself; and, although there are several for whom my affection commenced as early, there are few for whom it has risen so high. The truth of it is, I conceived an esteem for you from the first moment I saw you: and I had reason to believe, that you thought of me in the same favourable manner. But your long absence from Rome, which immediately succeeded our first acquaintance, together with that active course of life wherein I was engaged, and which was so entirely different from yours, did not, at that time, admit of our improving this mutual disposition, by a more frequent intercourse. Nevertheless, even so long ago as when Cæsar was in Gaul, and many years before the commencement of the civil war, I experienced your friendly inclinations towards me. For as you imagined that my union with Cæsar would be greatly advantageous on my side, and not altogether unserviceable to his, you generously recommended me to his favour, and was the cause of his cultivating my friendship. I forbear to mention several instances which occurred at that period, of the unreserved manner

in which we both conversed and corresponded together : as they were followed by others of a more important nature. At the opening of the civil war, when you were going to meet Cæsar at Brundisium, you paid me a visit in my Formian villa. This single favour, had it been attended with no other, was, at such a critical juncture, an ample testimony of your affection. But can I ever forget the generous advice you so kindly gave me at the same time ; and of which Trebatius, I remember, was himself a witness ? Can I ever forget the letter you afterwards wrote to me, when you went to join Cæsar in the district, if I mistake not, of Trebula ? It was soon after this, that, either by gratitude, by honour, or perhaps by fate, I was determined to follow Pompey into Greece : and was there any instance of an obliging zeal, which you did not exert in my absence, both for me and for my family ? was there any one, in short, whom either they or I had more reason to esteem our friend ? But I returned to Brundisium : and can I forget (let me ask once more) with what an obliging expedition you hastened, as soon as you heard of my arrival, to meet me at Tarentum ? How friendly were your visits ! how kind your endeavours to reason me out of that dejection, into which the dread of our general calamities had sunk me ! At length, however, I returned to Rome : where every proof of the greatest intimacy, and upon occasions too of the most important kind, mutually passed between us. It was by your directions and advice, that I learned to regulate my conduct with respect to Cæsar : and as to other instances of your friend-

ship, where was the man, except Cæsar himself, at whose house you more frequently visited, or upon whom you bestowed so many agreeable hours of your conversation? in some of which you may remember, it was, that you encouraged me to engage in my philosophical writings. When Cæsar afterwards returned from completing his victories, it was your first and principal endeavour to establish me again in his friendship: and it was an endeavour, in which you perfectly well succeeded. But to what purpose, you will ask, perhaps, this long detail? Longer, indeed, I must acknowledge it is, than I was myself aware: however, the use I would make of these several circumstances, is to shew you how much reason I have to be surprised, that you, who well know the truth of them, should believe me capable of having acted inconsistently with such powerful ties. But besides these motives of my attachment to you; motives known and visible to the whole world; there are others of a far less conspicuous kind, and which I am at a loss to represent in the terms they deserve. Every part, indeed, of your character, I admire: but when I consider you as the wise, the firm, and the faithful friend; as the polite, the witty, and the learned companion; these, I confess, are the striking points amidst your many other illustrious qualifications, with which I am particularly charmed. But it is time to return to the complaints you have alleged against me. Be assured then, I never once credited the report of your having voted for the law you mentioned to Trebatius: and, indeed, if I had, I should have been well persuaded that you were induced to concur in promoting it, upon

some very just and rational motive. But as the dignity of your character draws upon you the observation of all the world; the malevolence of mankind will, sometimes, give severer constructions to your actions, than most certainly they merit. If no instances of this kind have ever reached your knowledge, I know not in what manner to proceed in my justification. Believe me, however, I have always defended you, upon these occasions, with the same warmth and spirit, with which I am sensible you are wont to oppose, on your part, the calumnies that are thrown out upon myself. Thus, with regard to the law I just now mentioned, I have always peremptorily denied the truth of the charge: and as to your having been one of the managers of the late games, I have constantly insisted that you acted agreeably to those pious offices that are due to the memory of a departed friend. In respect to the latter, however, you cannot be ignorant, that if Cæsar was really a tyrant (as I think he was), your zeal may be considered in two very different views. It may be said (and it is an argument which I never fail to urge in your favour), that you shewed a very commendable fidelity, in thus displaying your affection to a departed friend. On the other hand, it may be alleged (and, in fact, it is alleged), that the liberties of our country ought to be far preferable even to the life itself of those whom we hold most dear. I wish you had been informed of the part I have always taken, whenever this question has been started. But there are two circumstances that reflect the brightest lustre upon your character, and which none of your friends more frequently or more warmly commende-

morate, than myself; I mean your having always most strongly recommended pacific measures to Cæsar, and constantly advised him to use his victory with moderation: in both which, the whole world is agreed with me in acknowledging your merit.

I think myself much obliged to our friend Trebatius, for having given me this occasion of justifying myself before you. And you will credit the professions I have here made, unless you imagine me void of every spark both of gratitude and generosity: an opinion, than which nothing can be more injurious to my sentiments, or more unworthy of yours. Farewel.

LETTER LXXI.

[A. U. 709.]

MARTIUS TO CICERO.

I RECEIVED great satisfaction from your letter, as it assured me of my holding that rank in your esteem, which I have ever wished and hoped to enjoy. Indeed I never doubted of your good opinion: but the value I set upon it, rendered me solicitous of preserving it without the least blemish. Conscious, however, that I had never given just offence to any candid and honest mind, I was the less disposed to believe, that you, whose sentiments are exalted by the cultivation of so many generous arts, could hastily credit any reports to my disadvantage: especially as you were one for whom I had at all times discovered much sincere good will. But as I have the pleasure to find that you think of me agreeably to my wishes, I

will drop this subject, in order to vindicate myself from those calumnies which you have so often, and with such singular generosity, opposed. I am perfectly well apprised of the reflections that have been cast upon me since Cæsar's death. It has been imputed to me, I know, that I lament the loss of my friend, and think with indignation on the murderers of the man I loved. "The welfare of our country," say my accusers (as if they had already made it appear that the destruction of Cæsar was for the benefit of the commonwealth,) "the welfare of our country is to be preferred to all considerations of amity." It may be so; but I will honestly confess, that I am by no means arrived at this elevated strain of patriotism. Nevertheless, I took no part with Cæsar in our civil dissensions; but neither did I desert my friend, because I disliked his measures. The truth is, I was so far from approving the civil war, that I always thought it unjustifiable, and exerted my utmost endeavours to extinguish those sparks by which it was kindled. In conformity to these sentiments, I did not make use of my friend's victory to the gratification of any lucrative or ambitious purposes of my own, as some others most shamefully did, whose interest with Cæsar was much inferior to mine. Far, in truth, from being a gainer by his success, I suffered greatly in my fortunes by that very law which saved many of those who now exult in his death from the disgrace of being obliged to fly their country*. Let me add, that I recommended the vanquished party

* The law alluded to, is probably that which Cæsar enacted for the relief of those who had contracted debts before the commencement of the civil war.

to his clemency, with the same warmth and zeal as if my own preservation had been concerned. Thus desirous that all my fellow-citizens might enjoy their lives in full security, can I repress the indignation of my heart against the assassins of that man, from whose generosity this privilege was obtained ; especially, as the same hands were lifted up to his destruction, which had first drawn upon him all the odium and envy of his administration ? Yet I am threatened, it seems, with their vengeance, for daring to condemn the deed. Unexampled insolence ! that some should glory in the perpetration of those crimes, which others should not be permitted even to deplore ! The meanest slave has ever been allowed to indulge, without control, the fears, the sorrows, or the joys of his heart ; but these our assertors of *liberty*, as they call themselves, endeavour to extort from me, by their menaces, this common privilege of every creature. Vain and impotent endeavours ! no dangers shall intimidate me from acting up to the generous duties of friendship and humanity ; persuaded, as I have ever been, that death in an honest cause ought never to be shunned, and frequently to be courted. Yet, why does it thus move their displeasure, if I only wish that they may repent of what they have perpetrated ? for wish I will acknowledge I do, that both they and all the world may regret the death of Cæsar. “ But as a member (say they) of the commonwealth, you ought, above all things, to desire its preservation.” Now that I sincerely do so, if the whole tenor of my past conduct, and all the hopes I can reasonably be supposed to entertain, will not sufficiently evince, I shall not attempt to

prove it by my professions. I conjure you, then, to judge of me, not by what others may say, but by the plain tendency of my actions ; and, if you believe I have any interest in the tranquillity of the republic, be assured, that I will have no communication with those who would impiously disturb its peace. Shall I renounce, indeed, those patriot principles I steadily pursued in my youth, when warmth and inexperience might have pleaded some excuse for errors ? Shall I, in the sober season of declining age, wantonly unravel, at once, the whole fair contexture of my better days ? Most assuredly not ; nor shall I ever give any other offence than in bewailing the severe catastrophe of a most intimate and illustrious friend ! Were I disposed to act otherwise, I should scorn to deny it ; nor should it be ever said, that I covered my crimes by hypocrisy, and feared to avow what I scrupled not to commit.

But to proceed to the other articles of the charge against me ; it is farther alleged that I presided at those games which the young Octavius exhibited in honour of Cæsar's victories. The charge, I confess, is true : but what connexion has an act of mere private duty, with the concerns of the republic ? It was an office, not only due from me to the memory of my departed friend, but which I could not refuse to that illustrious youth, his most worthy heir. I am reproached, also, with having been frequent in paying my visits of compliment to Antony ; yet you will find that the very men who impute this as a mark of disaffection to my country, appeared much more frequently at his levee, either to solicit his favours, or to receive them. But, after all, can there be any thing,

let me ask, more insufferably arrogant than this accusation? Cæsar never opposed my associating with whomsoever I thought proper, even though it were with persons whom he himself disapproved; and shall the men, who have cruelly robbed me of one friend, attempt likewise, by their malicious insinuation, to alienate me from another? But the moderation of my conduct will, I doubt not, discredit all reports that may hereafter be raised to my disadvantage; and I am persuaded, that even those who hate me for my attachment to Cæsar, would rather choose a friend of my disposition, than of their own. In fine, if my affairs should permit me, it is my resolution to spend the remainder of my days at Rhodes. But, if any accident should render it necessary for me to continue at Rome, my actions shall evince, that I am sincerely desirous of my country's welfare. In the mean time, I am much obliged to Trebatius for supplying you with an occasion of so freely laying open to me the amicable sentiments of your heart; as it affords me an additional reason for cultivating a friendship with one whom I have ever been disposed to esteem. Farewel.

ELEGANT EPISTLES

FROM THE

MOST EMINENT

WRITERS;

BEGINS THE FIRST:

ANCIENT AND CLASSICAL.

PART II



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ELEGANT EPISTLES.

BOOK THE FIRST.

Ancient and Classical.

PART II.



PLINY TO SEVERAL OF HIS FRIENDS.

LETTER I.

TO SEPTITIUS.

YOU have frequently pressed me to make a select collection of my letters (if, in truth, there be any which deserve a preference), and give them to the public. I have selected them accordingly; not, indeed, in their proper order of time, for I was not compiling a history; but just as they presented themselves to my hands. And now I have only to wish that you may have no reason to repent of your advice, nor I of my compliance: in that case, I may probably inquire after the rest, which at present lie neglected, and preserve those I shall hereafter write. Farewel.

LETTER II.

TO CANINIUS RUFUS.

How stands Comum*, that favourite scene of yours and mine? What becomes of the pleasant villa, the vernal portico, the shady plane-tree walk, the crystal canal, so agreeably winding along its flowery banks, together with the charming lake† below, which serves at once the purposes of use and beauty? What have you to tell me of the firm yet soft gestatio‡, the sunny bath, the public saloon, the private dining-room, and all the elegant apartments for repose, both at noon§ and night? Do these possess my friend, and divide his time with pleasing vicissitude? Or do the affairs of the world, as usual, call him frequently from his agreeable retreat? If the scene of your enjoyments lies wholly there, you are happy: if not, you are under the common error of mankind. But leave, my friend, (for certainly it is time) the sordid pursuits of life to others, and devote your-

* The city where Pliny was born: it still subsists, and is now called Como, situated upon the lake Larius, or Lago di Como, in the duchy of Milan. Pliny was born in the reign of Nero, in the 62nd year of the Christian era.

† The lake Larius, upon the banks of which this villa was situated.

‡ A piece of ground set apart for the purpose of exercise, either on horseback, or in vehicles; it was generally contiguous to the gardens, and laid out in the form of a circus.

§ It was customary among the Romans to sleep in the middle of the day; and they had apartments for that purpose distinct from their bed-chambers.

self, in this calm and undisturbed recess, entirely to pleasures of the studious kind. Let these employ your idle as well as serious hours; let them be at once your business and your amusement; the subjects of your waking and even sleeping thoughts: produce something that shall be really and for ever your own. All your other possessions will pass from one master to another: *this* alone, when once yours, will remain yours for ever. As I well know the temper and genius of him to whom I am addressing myself, I must exhort you to think of your abilities as they deserve: do justice to those excellent talents you possess, and the world, believe me, will certainly do so too. Farewel.

LETTER III.

TO POMPEIA CELERINA.

YOU might perceive, by my last short letter, I had no occasion for yours, to inform me of the various conveniences you enjoy at your several villas. The elegant accommodations which are to be found at Narnia*, Otriculum†, Carsola‡, Perugia§, particularly the pretty bath at Narnia, I am extremely well acquainted with. The fact is, I have a property in every thing which belongs to

* Now called Narni, a city in Umbria, in the duchy of Spoleto.

† Otricoli, in the same duchy.

‡ Carsola, in the same duchy.

§ Perugia, in Tuscany.

you ; and I know of no other difference between your house and my own, than that I am more carefully attended in the former than the latter. You may, perhaps, have occasion to make the same observation in your turn, whenever you shall give me your company here ; and I wish for it, not only that you may partake of *mine* with the same ease and freedom that I do of *yours*, but to awaken the industry of my domestics, who are grown somewhat careless in their attendance upon me. A long course of mild treatment is apt to wear out the impressions of awe in servants ; whereas new faces quicken their diligence, and they are generally more inclined to please their master by attentions to his guest, than to himself. Farewel.

LETTER IV.

TO CORNELIUS TACITUS.

YOU will certainly laugh (and laugh you may) when I tell you, that your old acquaintance is turned sportsman, and has taken three noble boars. What ! (you will say, with astonishment) Pliny !— Even he. However, I indulge, at the same time, my beloved inactivity ; and whilst I sat at my nets, you would have found me, not with my spear, but my pencil and tablet by my side. I mused and wrote, being resolved, if I returned with my hands empty, at least to come home with my memorandums full. Believe me, this manner of studying is not to be despised : you cannot conceive how greatly exercise contributes to enliven the imagi-

nation. There is, besides, something in the solemnity of the venerable woods with which one is surrounded, together with that profound silence* which is observed on these occasions, that strongly inclines the mind to meditation. For the future, therefore, let me advise you, whenever you hunt, to take your pencil and tablets with you, as well as your basket and bottle ; for be assured you will find Minerva as fond of traversing the hills as Diana. Farewel.

LETTER V.

TO MINUTIUS FUNDANUS.

WHEN we consider how the time passes at Rome, we cannot but be surprised, that, take any single day, and it either is, or at least seems to be, spent reasonably enough ; and yet, upon casting up the whole sum, the amount will appear quite otherwise. Ask any one how he has been employed to-day ? he will tell you, perhaps, “ I have been at the ceremony of investing the *manly* † *robe* ; this friend invited me to a wedding ; that desired me

* By the circumstance of *silence*, here mentioned, as well as by the whole air of this letter, it is plain the hunting here recommended was of a very different kind from what is practised amongst us. It is probable the wild boars were allured into their nets by some kind of prey, with which they were baited, while the sportsman watched at a distance, in silence and concealment.

† The Roman youths at the age of seventeen changed their habit, and took up the *toga virilis*, or manly gown, upon which occasion they were conducted, by the friends of the family, with great ceremony, either into the forum or capitol, and there invested with this new robe.

to attend the hearing of his cause ; one begged me to be witness to his will ; another called me to a consultation." These are offices which seem, while we are engaged in them, extremely necessary ; and yet when, in the silence of retirement, we look back upon the many hours thus employed, we cannot but condemn them as solemn impertinences. At such a season a man is apt to reflect, *How much of my life has been spent in trifles!* At least, it is a reflection which frequently occurs to me at Laurentum, after I have been employing myself in my studies, or even in the necessary care of the animal machine ; for the body must be repaired and supported, if we would preserve the mind in all its vigour. In that peaceful retreat, I neither hear nor say any thing of which I have occasion to repent. I suffer none to repeat to me the whispers of slander ; nor do I censure any man, unless myself, when I am dissatisfied with my compositions. There I live undisturbed by rumour, and free from the anxious solitudes of hope or fear, conversing only with myself and my books. True and genuine life ! pleasing and honourable repose ! More, perhaps, to be desired than employments of any kind ! Thou solemn sea and solitary shore, best and most retired scene for contemplation, with how many noble thoughts have ye inspired me ! Snatch then, my friend, as I have, the first occasion of leaving the noisy town, with all its frivolous pursuits, and devote your days to study, or even resign them to indolence ; for, as my ingenious friend Attilius pleasantly said, " It is better to have nothing to do, than to be *doing* nothing." Farewel.

LETTER VI.

TO ATRIUS CLEMENS.

IF ever polite literature flourished at Rome, it certainly flourishes now ; and I could give you many eminent instances : I will content myself, however, with naming only Euphrates the philosopher. I first became acquainted with this excellent person in my youth, when I served in the army in Syria. I had an opportunity of conversing with him familiarly, and took some pains to gain his affection : though that, indeed, was nothing difficult, for he is exceedingly open to access, and actuated by those social principles he professes to teach. I should think myself extremely happy if I had as fully answered the expectations he, at that time, conceived of me, as he exceeds every thing I had imagined of him. But, perhaps, I admire his excellencies more now, than I did then, because I know better how to appreciate them ; if I can with truth say I yet know. For as none but those who are skilled in painting, statuary, or the plastic art, can form a right judgment of any performance in those respective modes of representation ; so a man must, himself, have made great advances in philosophy, before he is capable of forming a just opinion of a philosopher. However, as far as I am qualified to determine, Euphrates is possessed of so many shining talents, that he cannot fail to strike the most injudicious observer. He reasons with much force, acuteness, and elegance, and frequently rises into all the

sublime and luxuriant eloquence of Plato. His style is rich and flowing, and, at the same time, so wonderfully captivating, that he forces the reluctant attention of the most unwilling hearer. His outward appearance is agreeable to all the rest; a fine figure, a comely aspect, long hair, and a large silver beard; circumstances which, though they may probably be thought trifling and accidental, contribute, however, to gain him much reverence. There is no affected negligence in his habit; his countenance is grave, but not austere; and his approach commands respect without creating awe. Distinguished as he is by the sanctity of his manners, he is no less so by his polite and affable address. He points his eloquence against the vices, not the persons, of mankind, and without severity reclaims the wanderer from the paths of virtue. His exhortations so captivate your attention, that you hang as it were upon his lips; and even after the heart is convinced, the ear still wishes to listen to the harmonious reasoner. His family consists of three children (two of which are sons), whom he educates with the utmost care. His father-in-law, Pompeius Julianus, as he greatly distinguished himself in every other part of his life, so particularly in this, that though he was himself of the highest rank in his province, yet, among many considerable competitors for his daughter, he preferred Euphrates, as first in merit, though not in dignity. But to dwell any longer upon the virtues of a man, whose conversation I am so unfortunate as not to have leisure sufficiently to enjoy, what would it avail but to increase my regret? My time is wholly taken up in

the execution of a very honourable, indeed, but very troublesome employment ; in hearing causes, answering petitions, passing accounts, and writing letters ; but letters, alas ! where genius has no share. I sometimes complain to Euphrates (for I have leisure at least for that) of these unpleasing occupations. He endeavours to comfort me, by affirming, that to be engaged in the service of the public, to hear and determine causes, to explain the laws, and administer justice, is a part, and the noblest part too, of philosophy ; as it is reducing to practice what her professors teach in speculation. It may be so ; but that it is as agreeable as to spend whole days in attending to his useful conversation—even *his* rhetoric will never be able to convince me. I cannot, therefore, but strongly recommend it to you, who have leisure, the next time you come to Rome (and you will come, I dare say, so much the sooner) to take the benefit of his elegant and refined instructions. I am not, you see, in the number of those who envy others the happiness they cannot share themselves ; on the contrary, it is a very sensible pleasure to me, when I find my friends in possession of an enjoyment from which I have the misfortune to be excluded. Farewel.

LETTER VII.

TO CALESTRIUS TIRO.

I HAVE suffered a most sensible loss ; if that word is sufficiently strong to express the misfortune

which has deprived me of so excellent a man. Corellius Rufus is dead ! and dead, too, by his own act ! a circumstance of great aggravation to my affliction ; as that sort of death which we cannot impute either to the course of nature, or the hand of Providence, is of all others the most to be lamented. It affords some consolation in the loss of those friends whom disease snatches from us, that they fall by the general destiny of mankind ; but those who destroy themselves, leave us under the inconsolable reflection that they had it in their power to have lived longer. 'Tis true, Corellius had many inducements to be fond of life ; a blameless conscience, high reputation, and great dignity of character, together with all the tender endearments of a wife, a daughter, a grandson, and sisters ; and amidst these considerable pledges of happiness, he had many and faithful friends. Still, it must be owned, he had the highest reason (which, to a wise man, will always have the force of the strongest obligation) to determine him in this resolution. He had long laboured under so tedious and painful a distemper, that even these blessings, great and valuable as they are, could not balance the evils he suffered. In his thirty-third year (as I have frequently heard him say) he was seized with the gout in his feet. This distemper he received from his father ; for diseases, as well as possessions, are sometimes transmitted by inheritance. A life of abstinence and virtue had somewhat broken the force of this distemper while he had strength and youth to struggle with it ; as a manly courage supported him under the increasing weight of it in his old age. I remember, in

the reign of Domitian, to have made him a visit at his villa, near Rome, where I found him under the most incredible and undeserved tortures ; for the gout was not only now in his feet, but had spread itself over his whole body. As soon as I entered his chamber, his servants withdrew ; for it was his constant rule, never to suffer them to be present when any very intimate friend was with him : he even carried it so far as to dismiss his wife upon such occasions, though worthy of the highest confidence. Casting his eyes round the room, “ Do you know,” says he, “ why I endure life under these cruel agonies ! It is with the hope that I may outlive, at least for one day, that villain*. And oh ! ye gods, had you given me strength, as you have given me resolution, I would infallibly have that pleasure !” Heaven heard his prayer, and having survived that tyrant, and lived to see liberty restored, he broke through those other great, but now less forcible attachments to the world, since he could leave it in possession of security and freedom.—His malady increased ; and, as it now grew too violent to admit of any relief from temperance, he resolutely determined to put an end to its uninterrupted attacks, by an effort of heroism. He had refused all sustenance during four days, when his wife Hispulla sent our common friend Geminius to me, with the melancholy news that he was resolved to die ; and that she and her daughter having in vain joined in their most tender persuasions to divert him from his purpose, the only hope they had now left was my

* Domitian.

endeavours to reconcile him to life. I ran to his house with the utmost precipitation. As I approached it, I met a second messenger from Hispulla, who informed me there was nothing to be hoped for, even from me, as he now seemed more inflexible than ever in his resolution. What confirmed their fears was an expression he made use of to his physician, who pressed him to take some nourishment. “ ’Tis resolved,” he replied ; an expression which, as it raised my admiration of his greatness of soul, so it does my grief, for the loss of him. I am every moment reflecting what a valuable friend, what an excellent man, I am deprived of. That he was arrived to his sixty-seventh year, which is an age even the strongest seldom exceed, I well know ; that he is delivered from a life of continual pain ; that he left his family and (what he loved even more) his country, in a flourishing state : all this I know. Still I cannot forbear to lament him, as if he had been in the prime and vigour of his days ; and I lament him (shall I own my weakness ?) upon a private account. For I have lost, oh ! my friend, I have lost the witness, the guide, and the governor of my life ! And, to confess to you, as I did to Calvisius, in the first transport of my grief, I sadly fear, now that I am no longer under his eye, I shall not keep so strict a guard over my conduct. Speak comfort to me, therefore, I entreat you ; not by telling me that *he was old, that he was infirm* : all this I know ; but by supplying me with some reflections that are uncommon and resistless, that neither the commerce of the world, nor the precepts of the philosophers can teach me. For

all that I have heard, and all that I have read, occur to me of themselves ; but all these are by far too weak to support me under so severe an affliction. Farewel.

LETTER VIII.

TO JUNIUS MAURICUS.

YOU desire me to look out a proper husband for your niece : it is with justice you enjoin me that office. You were a witness to the esteem and affection I bore that great man, her father, and with what noble instructions he formed my youth, and taught me to deserve those praises he was pleased to bestow upon me. You could not give me then a more important, or more agreeable commission ; nor could I be employed in an office of higher honour, than that of choosing a young man worthy of being father of the grand-children of Rusticus Arulenus ; a choice I should be long in determining, if I were not acquainted with Minutius Æmilianus, who seems formed for our purpose. He loves me with all that warmth of affection which is usual between young men of equal years (as, indeed, I have the advance of him but by a very few), and reveres me, at the same time, with all the deference due to age ; and, in a word, he is no less desirous to model himself by my instructions, than I was by those of yourself and your brother. He is a native of Brixia*, one

* A town in the territories of Venice, now called Brescia.

of those provinces in Italy which still retain much of the frugal simplicity and purity of ancient manners. He is the son of Minutius Macrinus, whose humble desires were satisfied with standing at the head of the equestrian order : for though he was nominated by Vespasian among those whom that prince dignified with the prætorian office, yet, with an inflexible greatness of mind, he resolutely preferred an elegant repose, to the ambitious, shall I call them, or honourable pursuits in which we in public life are engaged ? His grandmother, on the mother's side, is Serrana Procula, of Padua : you are no stranger to the character of its citizens ; yet Serrana is looked upon, even among these people of correct manners, as an exemplary instance of strict virtue. Acilius, his uncle, is a man of singular gravity, wisdom, and integrity. In short, you will find nothing throughout his family unworthy of yours. Minutius himself has great vivacity, as well as application, together with a most amiable and becoming modesty.—He has already, with much credit, passed through the office of quæstor, tribune, and prætor ; so that you will be spared the trouble of soliciting for him those honourable employments. He has a genteel and florid countenance, with a certain noble mien that speaks the man of distinction : *avantageés*, I think, by no means to be slighted, and which I consider as the proper tribute to virgin innocence. I am doubtful whether I should add, that his father is very rich. When I contemplate the character of those who require a husband of my choosing, I know it is unnecessary to mention wealth ; but when I reflect upon the prevailing manners of the

age, and even the laws of Rome, which rank a man according to his possessions, it certainly claims some regard; and, indeed, in establishments of this nature, where children and many other circumstances are to be duly weighed, it is an article that well deserves to be taken into the account. You will be inclined, perhaps, to suspect that affection has had too great a share in the character I have been drawing, and that I have heightened it beyond the truth. But I will stake all my credit, that you will find every circumstance far beyond what I have represented. I confess, indeed, I love Minutius (as he justly deserves) with the warmth of a most ardent affection; but for that very reason I would not ascribe more to his merit than I know it will support. Farewel.

LETTER IX.

TO SEPTITIUS CLARUS.

How happened it, my friend, that you did not keep your engagement the other night to sup with me? But take notice, justice is to be had, and I expect you shall fully reimburse me the expense I was at to treat you; which, let me tell you, was no small sum. I had prepared, you must know, a lettuce a-piece, three snails*, two eggs,

* A dish of snails was very common at a Roman table. The manner used to fatten them is related by some very grave authors of antiquity; and Pliny the elder mentions one Fulvius Hirpinus, who had studied that art with so much success, that the shells of some of his snails would contain about ten quarts. In some parts of Switzerland this food is still in high repute.

and a barley cake, with some sweet wine and snow* ; the snow most certainly I shall charge to your account, as a rarity that will not keep. Besides all these curious dishes, there were olives of Andalusia, gourds, shalots, and a hundred other dainties equally sumptuous. You should likewise have been entertained either with an interlude, the rehearsal of a poem, or a piece of music, as you liked best ; or (such was my liberality) with all three. But the luxurious delicacies † and Spanish dancers of a certain —— I know not who, were, it seems, more to your taste. However, I shall have my revenge of you, depend upon it ;—in what manner, shall at present be a secret. In good truth, it was not kind thus to mortify your friend—I had almost said yourself ;—and, upon second thoughts, I do say so : for how agreeably should we have spent the evening, in laughing,

* The Romans used snow not only to cool their liquors, but their stomachs, after having inflamed themselves with high eating. This custom still prevails in Italy, especially at Naples, where (as Mr. Addison observes) they “ drink very few liquors, not so much as water, that have not lain in *fresco*, and every body, from the highest to the lowest, makes use of it ; insomuch that a scarcity of snow would raise a mutiny at Naples, as much as a dearth of corn or provisions in another country.”

† In the original the dishes are specified, viz. oysters, the matrices of sows with a certain sea shell-fish, prickly like a hedge-hog, called *echinus*, all in the highest estimation among the Roman admirers of table luxury, as appears by numberless passages in the classic writers. Our own country had the honour to furnish them with oysters, which they fetched from Sandwich : Montanus, mentioned by Juvenal, was so well skilled in the science of good eating, that he could tell by the first taste whether they came from that coast.

trifling, and literary amusements ! You may sup, I confess, at many places more splendidly ; but you can no where be treated with more unconstrained cheerfulness, simplicity, and freedom : only make the experiment ; and if you do not ever afterwards prefer my table to any other, never favour me with your company again. Farewel.

LETTER X.

TO CORNELIUS TACITUS.

I HAVE frequent debates with a learned and judicious person of my acquaintance, who admires nothing so much in the eloquence of the bar, as conciseness. I agree with him, where the cause will admit of this precision, it may be properly adopted ; but insist, that to omit what is material to be mentioned, or only slightly to touch upon those points which should be strongly inculcated and impressed on the minds of the audience, is in effect to desert the cause that is undertaken. In many cases, a copious manner of expression gives strength and weight to our ideas, which frequently make impressions upon the mind, as iron does upon solid bodies, rather by repeated strokes than a single blow. In answer to this, he usually has recourse to authorities, and produces Lysias amongst the Grecians, together with Cato and the two Gracchi, among our own countrymen, as instances in favour of the concise style. In return, I name Demosthenes, Æschines, Hyperides, and many others in opposition to Lysias ; while I con-

front Cato and the Gracchi, with Cæsar, Pollio, Cælius, but above all, Cicero, whose longest oration is generally esteemed the best. It is in good compositions, as in every thing else that is valuable ; the more there is of them, the better. You may observe in statues, basso-relievos, pictures, and the bodies of men, and even in animals and trees, that nothing is more graceful than magnitude, if accompanied with proportion. The same holds true in pleading ; and even in books, a large volume carries something of beauty and authority in its very size. My antagonist, who is extremely dexterous at evading an argument, eludes all this, and much more which I usually urge to the same purpose, by insisting that those very persons, upon whose works I found my opinion, made considerable additions to their orations when they published them. This I deny ; and appeal to the harangues of numberless orators, particularly to those of Cicero for Murena and Varenus, where he seems to have given us little more than the general charge. Whence it appears, that many things which he enlarged upon at the time he delivered those orations, were retrenched when he gave them to the public. The same excellent orator informs us, that, agreeably to the ancient custom, which allowed only of one counsel on a side, Cluentius had no other advocate than himself ; and, he tells us further, that he employed four whole days in defence of Cornelius : by which it plainly appears, that those orations which, when delivered at their full length, had necessarily taken up so much time at the bar, were greatly altered and abridged when he afterwards comprised them

in a single volume, though, I must confess, indeed, a large one. But it is objected, there is a wide difference between good pleading and just composition. This opinion, I acknowledge, has had some favourers, and it may be true ; nevertheless, I am persuaded (though I may perhaps be mistaken) that, as it is impossible a pleading may be well received by the audience, which has not merit enough to recommend it to the reader ; so a good oration cannot be a bad pleading : for the oration on paper is, in truth, the original and model of the speech that was pronounced. It is for this reason we find, in many of the best orations extant, numberless expressions which have the air of unpremeditated discourse ; and even in those which we are sure were never spoken ; as, for instance, in the following passage from the oration against Verres—" A certain mechanic—what's his name ? Oh, I am obliged to you for helping me to it : yes, I mean Polycletus." It cannot then be denied, that the nearer approach a speaker makes to the rules of just composition, the more perfect he will be in his art ; always supposing, however, that he has the necessary indulgence in point of time ; for, if he be limited in that, no blame can justly be fixed upon the advocate, though much may be chargeable upon the judge. The sense of the laws, I am sure, is on my side, which are by no means sparing of the orator's time ; it is not brevity, but copiousness, a full representation of every material circumstance, which they recommend. And how is it possible for an advocate to acquit himself of that duty, unless in the most insignificant causes, if he

affects to be concise? Let me add what experience, that unerring guide, has taught me: it has frequently been my province to act both as an advocate and a judge; and I have also attended as an assessor*. Upon those occasions, I have ever found that the judgments of mankind are to be influenced by different modes of application, and that the slightest circumstances frequently produce the most important consequences. There is so vast a variety in the dispositions and understandings of men, that they seldom agree in their opinions concerning any one point in debate before them; or, if they do, it is generally from the movement of different passions. Besides, as every man naturally favours his own discoveries, when he hears an argument urged which had before occurred to himself, he will certainly embrace it as extremely convincing. The orator, therefore, should so adapt himself to his audience, as to throw out something which every one of them, in turn, may receive and approve as conformable to his own particular sentiments. I remember when Regulus and I were concerned together in a cause, he said to me, "You seem to think it necessary to dwell upon every single circumstance; whereas I always take aim at once at my adversary's throat, and there I closely press him." ('Tis true, he tenaciously holds whatever part he has once fixed upon; but the misfortune is, he is extremely apt to mistake the right place.) I answered, it might possibly happen, that what he called the throat,

* The prætor was assisted by ten assessors, five of whom were senators, and the rest knights. With these he was obliged to consult before he pronounced sentence.

was, in reality, some less vital part. As for myself, said I, who do not pretend to direct my aim with so much certainty, I attack every part, and push at every opening; in short, to use a vulgar proverb, *I leave no stone unturned*. As in agriculture, it is not my vineyards, or my woods alone, but my fields also, that I cultivate; and (to pursue the allusion) as I do not content myself with sowing those fields with only one kind of grain, but employ several different sorts; so, in my pleadings at the bar, I scatter various arguments like so many kinds of seed, in order to reap from thence whatever may happen to succeed: for the disposition of your judges is as precarious, and as little to be ascertained, as that of soils and seasons. I remember the comic writer Eupolis mentions it in praise of that excellent orator Pericles, that

On his lips *Persuasion* hung,
And powerful *Reason* rul'd his tongue:
Thus he alone could boast the art,
To charm at once and pierce the heart.

But could Pericles without the richest variety of expression, and merely by force of the concise or the rapid style, or both together (for they are extremely different), have thus *charmed* and *pierced* the heart? To delight and to persuade, requires time, and a great compass of language; and to leave a *sting* in the minds of his audience, is an effect not to be expected from an orator who slightly pushes, but from him, and him only, who thrusts home and deep. Another comic poet*, speaking of the same orator, says,

* Aristophanes.

- His mighty words like Jove's own thunder roll;
Greece hears, and trembles to her inmost soul.

But it is not the close and the reserved; it is the copious, the majestic, and the sublime orator, who, with the lightning and thunder of his eloquence, hurries you impetuously along, and bears down all before him. There is a just mean, I own, in every thing: but he equally misseth the mark, who falls short of it, as he who goes beyond it; he who confines himself in too narrow a compass, as he who launches out with too great a latitude. Hence it is as common to hear our orators condemned for being too barren, as too luxuriant; for not reaching, as well as for overflowing the bounds of their subject. Both, no doubt, are equally distant from the proper medium; but with this difference, however, that in the one the fault arises from an abundance, in the other, from a deficiency; an error, which, if it be not a sign of a more correct, yet it is certainly of a more fertile genius. When I say this, I would not be understood to approve that everlasting talker* mentioned in Homer, but that other† described in the following lines:

Frequent and soft as falls the winter snow,
Thus from his lips the copious periods flow.

Not but I extremely admire him‡ too, of whom the poet says,

Few were his words, but wonderfully strong.

* Thersites, *Iliad* ii. v. 212.

† Ulysses, *Iliad* iii. v. 222.

‡ Menelaus, *ibid.*

Yet, if I were to choose, I should clearly give the preference to the style resembling *winter snow*, that is, to the full and diffusive; in short, to that pomp of eloquence which seems all heavenly and divine. But, it is urged, the harangue of a more moderate length is most generally admired. It is so, I confess:—but by whom? By the indolent only; and to fix the standard by the laziness and false delicacy of these, would surely be the highest absurdity. Were you to consult persons of this cast, they would tell you, not only that it is best to say little, but that it is best to say nothing.

Thus, my friend, I have laid before you my sentiments upon this subject, and I shall readily abandon them, if not agreeable to yours. But, should you dissent from me, I beg you would communicate to me your reasons. For though I ought to yield, in this case, to your more enlightened judgment, yet, in a point of such consequence, I had rather receive my conviction from argument, than authority. If you should be of my opinion in this matter, a line or two in return, intimating your concurrence, will be sufficient to confirm me in the justness of my sentiments: on the contrary, if you should think me mistaken, I beg you to give me your objections at large. Yet has it not something of the air of bribery, to request only a short letter, if you agree with me; but enjoin you the trouble of a very long one, if you should be of a different opinion? Farewel.

LETTER XI.

TO BEBIUS.

MY friend and guest, Tranquillus, has an inclination to purchase a small farm, of which, as I am informed, an acquaintance of yours intends to dispose. I beg you would endeavour he may obtain it upon reasonable terms; which will add to his satisfaction in the purchase. A dear bargain is always disagreeable, particularly as it is a reflection upon the buyer's judgment. There are several circumstances attending this little villa, which (supposing my friend has no objection to the price) are extremely suitable to his taste and desires: the convenient distance from Rome, the goodness of the roads, the smallness of the building, and the very few acres of land around it, which are just enough to amuse, but not to employ him. To a man of the literary turn that Tranquillus is, it is sufficient if he has but a small spot to relieve the mind and divert the eye, where he may saunter round his grounds, traverse his single walk, grow familiar with his two or three vines, and count his little plantations. I mention these particulars, to let you see how much he will be obliged to me, as I shall be to you, if you can help him to this convenient little box, at a price of which he shall have no occasion to repent. Farewel.

LETTER XII.

TO VOCONIUS ROMANUS.

ROME has not for many years beheld a more magnificent and solemn spectacle, than was lately exhibited in the public funeral of that great man, the illustrious and fortunate* Virginius Rufus. He lived thirty years in the full enjoyment of the highest reputation: and as he had the satisfaction to see his actions celebrated by poets, and recorded by historians, he seems even to have anticipated his fame with posterity. He was thrice raised to the dignity of consul, that he who refused to be the first of princes†, might, at least,

* The ancients seem to have considered fortune as a mark of merit in the person who was thus distinguished. Cicero (to borrow the observation of an excellent writer) recommended Pompey to the Romans for their general upon three accounts, as he was a man of courage, conduct, and *good fortune*; and not only Sylla the dictator, but several of the Roman emperors, as is still to be seen upon their medals, among other titles, gave themselves that of *felix*, or fortunate.

† At the time of the general defection from Nero, Virginius was at the head of a very powerful army in Germany, which had pressed him, and even attempted to force him, to accept the title of emperor. But he constantly refused it; adding, that he would not even suffer it to be given to any person but whom the senate should elect. With this army he marched against Vindex, who had put himself at the head of 100,000 Gauls. Having come up with him, he gave him battle, in which Vindex was slain, and his forces entirely defeated. After this victory, when Nero's death was known in the army, the soldiers renewed their application to Virginius to accept the imperial dignity; and though one of the tribunes

be the highest of subjects. As he escaped the resentment of those emperors to whom his virtues had given umbrage, and even rendered him odious, and ended his days when this best of princes, this friend of mankind*, was in quiet possession of the empire ; it seems as if Providence had purposely preserved him to these times, that he might receive the honour of a public funeral. He calmly expired in the 84th year of his age, universally esteemed and revered ; and had enjoyed an uninterrupted state of health during his whole life, excepting only a paralytic tremor in his hands, which, however, was attended with no pain. His last sickness, indeed, was severe and tedious ; but even that circumstance contributed to render his character the more laudable. As he was preparing to return his public acknowledgments to the emperor, who had raised him to the consulship, a large volume which he accidentally received at that time, too weighty for a feeble old man, slipped out of his hands. In hastily endeavouring to recover it, the pavement

rushed into his tent, and threatened that he should either *receive the empire, or his sword through his body*, he resolutely persisted in his former sentiments. But as soon as the news of Nero's death was confirmed, and that the senate had declared for Galba, he prevailed with the army, though with much difficulty, to support that prince.

* The justness of this glorious title, *the friend of mankind*, here given to Nerva, is confirmed by the concurrent testimony of all the historians of these times. That excellent emperor's short reign seems, indeed, to have been one uninterrupted series of generous and benevolent actions ; and he used to express the satisfaction he felt of being conscious that he had not committed a single act which could give just offence to any man.

being extremely slippery, he fell down and broke his thigh-bone ; which fracture, as it was unskillfully set at first, and having, besides, the infirmities of age to contend with, could never be brought to unite again. The funeral obsequies paid to the memory of this great man, have done honour to the emperor, to the present age, and even to eloquence herself. The consul Cornelius Tacitus pronounced his funeral oration : and thus the series of his felicities was completed by the public applause of a most eloquent orator. He died full of years and of glory, as illustrious by the honours he refused as by those he accepted. Still, however, he will be missed and lamented by the world, as the shining model of a better age ; especially by myself, who not only admired him as a patriot, but loved him as a friend. We were natives of the same province, and of neighbouring towns, and our estates also were contiguous. Besides these accidental connexions, he was likewise left guardian to me ; and, indeed, he always treated me with the affection of a parent. Whenever I offered myself a candidate for any employment in the state, he constantly supported me with his interest ; and although he had long since renounced all offices of this nature, he would kindly give up the repose of his retirement, and come in person to give me his suffrage. At the season of the year when it is customary for the priests to nominate such as they judge worthy to be received into their sacred office*, he constantly

* Namely, of augurs. " This college, as regulated by Sylla, consisted of fifteen, who were all persons of the first distinction in Rome : it was a priesthood for life, of a character indelible, which no crime or forfeiture could

proposed me. Even in his last sickness I received a distinguishing mark of his affection : for, being apprehensive he might be appointed, by the senate, one of the five commissioners to reduce the public expences, he fixed upon me, young as I am, to carry his excuses, in preference to so many other friends of superior age and dignity ; and, in a very obliging manner, assured me, that had he a son of his own, he would, nevertheless, have employed me in that office. Have I not cause then to lament his death, as if it were immature, and thus pour out the fulness of my grief into the bosom of my friend ? If, indeed, it be reasonable to grieve upon this occasion, or to esteem that event *death*, which, to *such* a man, is rather to be looked upon as the period of his mortality than the end of his life. He lives, my friend, and will continue to live for ever ; and his fame will spread farther, and be more celebrated by mankind, now that he is removed from their sight.—I had many other things to write to you, but my mind is too full of the present subject to turn it to any other. Virginius is constantly in my thoughts ; the vain but lively impressions of him are continually before my eyes, and I am for ever fondly imagining that I hear him, converse with him, and embrace him. We have still, perhaps, some citizens amongst us who may rival him in virtue, and some may hereafter rise ; but not one, I am persuaded, that will ever equal him in glory. Farewel.

efface ; it was necessary, that every candidate should be nominated to the people by two augurs, who gave a solemn testimony upon oath of his dignity and fitness for that office.”

LETTER XIII.

TO PRISCUS.

As I know you gladly embrace every opportunity of obliging me, so there is no man to whom I had rather be obliged. I apply to you, therefore, preferably to any other person, for a favour which I am extremely desirous of obtaining. You, who are commander in chief of a very considerable army, have many opportunities of exercising your generosity; and the length of time you have enjoyed that post, must have enabled you to provide for all your friends. I hope you will now turn your eyes upon some of mine: they are but a few, indeed, for whom I shall solicit you; though your generous disposition, I know, would be better pleased if the number were greater. But it would ill become me to trouble you with recommending more than one or two: at present, I will only mention Voconius Romanus. His father was of great distinction among the Roman knights; and his father-in-law, or, as I might more properly call him, his second father (for his affectionate treatment of Voconius entitles him to that appellation), was still more conspicuous. His mother was one of the most considerable ladies of Upper Spain; you know what character the people of that province bear, and how remarkable they are for the strictness of their manners. As for himself, he has been lately admitted into the sacred order of priesthood. Our friendship began with our studies, and we were early united in the closest intimacy.

We lived together under the same roof, both in town and country; and he was a party in my most serious and gayest hours: where, indeed, could I have found a more faithful friend, or more agreeable companion? In his conversation, and even in his very voice and countenance, there is the most amiable sweetness; as at the bar he discovers an elevated genius, an easy and harmonious elocution, a clear and penetrating apprehension. He has so happy a turn for epistolary writing*, that were you to read his letters, you would imagine they had been dictated by the Muses themselves. I love him with a more than common affection; and I know he returns it with equal ardour. Even in the earlier part of our lives, I warmly embraced every opportunity of doing him all the good offices which then lay in my power; as I have lately obtained for him of the emperor † the privilege † granted to those who have three children: a privilege, which, though Cæsar very rarely bestows, and always with great caution, yet he conferred, at my request, in such a manner, as to give it the air and grace of being his own choice. The best way of shewing that I think he deserves the obligations he has already received

* It appears from this, and some other passages in these letters, that the art of epistolary writing was esteemed, by the Romans, in the number of liberal and polite accomplishments.

† Trajan.

‡ By a law, passed A. U. 762, it was enacted, that every citizen of Rome, who had three children, should be excused all troublesome offices where he lived. This privilege the emperors sometimes extended to those who were not legally entitled to it.

from me, is, by increasing them, especially as he always accepts my services with so much gratitude as to merit farther.

Thus I have given you a faithful account of Romanus, and informed you how thoroughly I have experienced his worth, and how much I love him. Let me entreat you to honour him with your patronage in a way suitable to the generosity of your heart, and the eminence of your station. But above all, admit him into a share of your affection: for, though you were to confer upon him the utmost you have in your power to bestow, you can give him nothing so valuable as your friendship: and that you may be assured he is worthy of it, even to the highest degree of intimacy, I send you this short sketch of his character. I should continue my intercessions in his behalf, but that I am persuaded you do not require to be importuned, and I have already repeated them in every line of this letter; for, to shew a just reason for what one asks, is to intercede in the strongest manner. Farewel.

LETTER XIV.

TO GALUS.

You are surprised, it seems, that I am so fond of my Laurentinum* or (if you like the appellation

* Pliny had no estate round this seat, his whole possessions here being included (as he informs us in another letter) in the house and gardens. It was merely a winter villa, in which he used to spend some of the cold months, whenever his business admitted of his absence

better) my Laurens : but you will cease to wonder, when I acquaint you with the beauty of the villa, the advantages of its situation, and the extensive prospect of the sea-coast. It is but seventeen miles distant from Rome ; so that, having finished my affairs in town, I can pass my evenings here, without breaking in upon the business of the day. There are two different roads to it ; if you go by that of Laurentum, you must turn off at the fourteenth mile-stone : if by Ostia, at the eleventh. Both of them are, in some parts, sandy, which makes it somewhat heavy and tedious, if you travel in a carriage, but easy and pleasant to those who ride on horseback. The landscape, on all sides, is extremely diversified, the prospect, in some places, being confined by woods, in others, extending over large and beautiful meadows, where numberless flocks of sheep and herds of cattle, which the severity of the winter has driven from the mountains, fatten in the vernal warmth of this rich pasturage. My villa is large enough to afford all desirable accommodations, without being extensive. The porch before it is plain, but not mean, through which you enter into a portico in the form of the letter D, which includes a small but agreeable area. This affords a very commodious retreat in bad weather, not only as it is inclosed with windows, but particularly as it is sheltered by an extraordinary projection of the roof. From

from Rome ; and for this reason it is, that we find warmth is so much considered in the disposition of the several apartments, &c. And, indeed, he seems to have a principal view to its advantages as a winter house throughout the whole description of it.

the middle of this portico you pass into an inward court, extremely pleasant, and from thence into a handsome hall, which runs out towards the sea ; so that when there is a south-west wind, it is gently washed with the waves, which spend themselves at the foot of it. On every side of this hall there are either folding-doors, or windows equally large, by which means you have a view from the front and the two sides, as it were, of three different seas: from the back part, you see the middle court, the portico, and the area; and, by another view, you look through the portico into the porch, from whence the prospect is terminated by the woods and mountains which are seen at a distance. On the left hand of this hall, somewhat farther from the sea, is a large drawing-room, and beyond that, a second of a smaller size, which has one window to the rising and another to the setting sun: this has likewise a prospect of the sea, but being at a greater distance, is less incommoded by it. The angle which the projection of the hall forms with this drawing-room, retains and increases the warmth of the sun; and hither my family retreat in winter to perform their exercises: it is sheltered from all winds, except those which are generally attended with clouds, so that nothing can render this place useless, but what, at the same time, destroys the fair weather. Contiguous to this, is a room forming the segment of a circle, the windows of which are so placed, as to receive the sun the whole day: in the walls are contrived a sort of cases, which contain a collection of such authors whose works can never be read too often. From hence you pass into a bed-chamber through

a passage, which, being boarded and suspended, as it were, over a stove which runs underneath, tempers the heat which it receives and conveys to all parts of this room. The remainder of this side of the house is appropriated to the use of my slaves and freedmen; but most of the apartments, however, are neat enough to receive any of my friends. In the opposite wing is a room ornamented in a very elegant taste; next to which lies another room, which, though large for a parlour, makes but a moderate dining-room; it is well warmed and enlightened, not only by the direct rays of the sun, but by their reflection from the sea. Beyond, is a bed-chamber, together with its ante-chamber, the height of which renders it cool in summer; as its being sheltered on all sides from the winds makes it warm in winter. To this apartment another of the same sort is joined by one common wall. From thence you enter into the grand and spacious *cooling-room* *, belonging to the bath †, from the opposite

* The principal use of this room seems to have been designed to prepare the bodies of those that had been in the former room, for their going into the warmer air.

† The custom of bathing in hot water, was become so habitual to the Romans, in Pliny's time, that they every day practised it before they sat down to eat; for which reason, in the city, the public baths were extremely numerous; in which Vitruvius gives us to understand, there were, for each sex, three rooms for bathing, one of cold water, one of warm, and one still warmer; and there were cells of three degrees of heat for sweating: to the before-mentioned members, were added others for anointing and bodily exercises. The last thing they did before they entered into the dining-room was to bathe; what preceded their washing was their exercise in the

walls of which, two round basons project, sufficiently large to swim in. Contiguous to this is the perfuming-room, then the sweating-room, and next to that, the furnace which conveys the heat to the baths: adjoining, are two other little bathing-rooms, fitted up in an elegant rather than costly manner: annexed to this, is a warm bath of extraordinary workmanship, wherein one may swim, and have a prospect, at the same time, of the sea. Not far from hence, stands the tennis-court, which lies open to the warmth of the afternoon sun. From thence you ascend a sort of turret, containing two entire apartments below; as there are the same number above, besides a dining-room which commands a very extensive prospect

spheristerium, prior to which it was their custom to anoint themselves. As for their sweating-rooms, though they were, doubtless, in all their baths, we do not find them to have been used but upon particular occasions.

The Roman magnificence seems to have particularly displayed itself in the article of their baths. Seneca, dating one of his epistles from a villa which once belonged to Scipio Africanus, takes occasion, from thence, to draw a parallel between the simplicity of the earlier ages, and the luxury of his own times in that instance. By the idea he gives of the latter, they were works of the highest splendour and expense. The walls were composed of Alexandrine marble, the veins whereof were so artfully managed, as to have the appearance of a regular picture: the edges of the basons were set round with a most valuable kind of stone, found in Thasius, one of the Greek islands, variegated with veins of different colours, interspersed with streaks of gold; the water was conveyed through silver pipes, and fell, by several descents, in beautiful cascades. The floors were inlaid with precious gems, and an intermixture of statues and colonades contributed to throw an air of elegance and grandeur upon the whole.

of the sea, together with the beautiful villas that stand interspersed upon the coast. At the other end, is a second turret, in which is a room that receives the rising and setting sun. Behind this is a large repository, near to which is a gallery of curiosities, and underneath a spacious dining-room, where the roaring of the sea, even in a storm, is heard but faintly: it looks upon the garden and the *gestatio*, which surrounds the garden. The *gestatio* is encompassed with a box-tree hedge, and where that is decayed, with rose-mary: for the box, in those parts which are sheltered by the buildings, preserves its verdure perfectly well; but where, by an open situation, it lies exposed to the spray of the sea, though at a great distance, it entirely withers. Between the garden and this *gestatio* runs a shady plantation of vines, the alley of which is so soft, that you may walk barefoot upon it without any injury. The garden is chiefly planted with fig and mulberry trees, to which this soil is as favourable, as it is averse from all others. In this place is a banqueting-room, which, though it stands remote from the sea, enjoys a prospect nothing inferior to that view: two apartments run round the back part of it, the windows whereof look upon the entrance of the villa, and into a very pleasant kitchen garden. From hence an enclosed portico * extends, which, by its great length, you might suppose erected for the use of the public. It has a range of windows on each side, but on that which looks towards the sea, they are double

* These enclosed porticos differed no otherwise from our present galleries, than that they had pillars in them: the use of this room was for walking.

the number of those next the garden. When the weather is fair and serene, these are all thrown open; but if it blows, those on the side the wind sets are shut, while the others remain unclosed without any inconvenience. Before this portico lies a terrace, perfumed with violets, and warmed by the reflection of the sun from the portico, which, as it retains the rays, so it keeps off the north-east wind; and it is as warm on this side as it is cool on the opposite: in the same manner it proves a defence against the south-west; and thus, in short, by means of its several sides, breaks the force of the winds from what point soever they blow. These are some of its winter advantages: they are still more considerable in summer; for at that season it throws a shade upon the terrace during all the forenoon, as it defends the *gestatio*, and that part of the garden which lies contiguous to it, from the afternoon sun, and casts a greater or less shade, as the day either increases or decreases; but the portico itself is then coolest, when the sun is most scorching, that is, when its rays fall directly upon the roof. To these its benefits I must not forget to add, that, by setting open the windows, the western breezes have a free draught, and, by that means, the enclosed air is prevented from stagnating. On the upper end of the terrace and portico stands a detached building in the garden, which I call my *favourite*; and indeed it is particularly so, having erected it myself. It contains a very warm winter-room, one side of which looks upon the terrace, the other has a view of the sea, and both lie exposed to the sun. Through the folding doors you see

the opposite chamber, and from the window is a prospect of the enclosed portico. On that side next the sea, and opposite to the middle wail, stands a little elegant recess, which, by means of glass doors and a curtain, is either laid into the adjoining room, or separated from it. It contains a couch and two chairs. As you lie upon this couch, from the feet you have a prospect of the sea; if you look behind, you see the neighbouring villas; and from the head you have a view of the woods: these three views may be seen either distinctly* from so many different windows in the room, or blended together in one confused prospect. Adjoining to this is a bed-chamber, which neither the voice of the servants, the murmuring of the sea, nor even the roaring of a tempest, can reach; not lightning nor the day itself can penetrate it, unless you open the windows. This profound tranquillity is occasioned by a passage, which separates the wall of this chamber from that of the garden; and thus, by means of that intervening space, every noise is precluded. Annexed to this is a small stove-room, which, by opening a little window, warms the bed-chamber to the degree of heat required. Beyond this lies a chamber and ante-chamber, which enjoys the sun, though obliquely indeed, from the time it rises, till the afternoon. When I retire to this garden-apartment, I fancy myself a hundred miles from my own house, and take particular pleasure in it at the

* It must have been from the middle of the room that he could see all these prospects separate and distinct, which, upon a nearer approach to any particular window, must have appeared intermingled.

feast of the Saturnalia*, when, by the licence of that season of festivity, every other part of my villa resounds with the mirth of my domestics: thus I neither interrupt their diversions, nor they my studies. Among the pleasures and conveniences of this situation, there is one disadvantage, and that is, the want of a running stream; but this defect is, in a great measure, supplied by wells, or rather I should call them fountains, for they rise very near the surface. And, indeed, the quality of this coast is remarkable; for in what part soever you dig, you meet, upon the first turning up of the ground, with a spring of pure water, not in the least salt, though so near the sea. The neighbouring forests afford an abundant supply of fuel; as every other accommodation of life may be had from Ostia: to a moderate man, indeed, even the next village (between which and my house there is only one villa) would furnish all common necessities. In that little place there are no less than three public baths; which is a great conveniency, if it happen that my friends come in unexpectedly, or make too short a stay to allow time for preparing my own. The whole coast is beautifully diversified by the contiguous or detached villas that are spread upon it, which, whether you view them from the sea or the shore, have the appearance of so many different cities. The strand is sometimes, after a long calm, per-

* A feast held in honour of the god Saturn, which began on the 19th of December, and continued, as some say, for seven days. It was a time of general rejoicing, particularly among the slaves, who had at this season the privilege of taking great liberties with their masters.

fectly smooth, though, in general, by the storms driving the waves upon it, it is rough and uneven. I cannot boast that our sea produces any very extraordinary fish ; however, it supplies us with exceeding fine soals and prawns ; but as to provisions of other kinds, my villa pretends to excel even inland countries, particularly in milk ; for hither the cattle come from the meadows in great numbers, in pursuit of shade and water.

Tell me now, have I not just cause to bestow my time and my affection upon this delightful retreat ? Surely you are too fondly attached to the pleasures of the town, if you do not feel an inclination to take a view of this my favourite villa. I much wish, at least, you were so disposed, that to the many charms with which it abounds, it might have the very considerable addition of your company to recommend it. Farewel.

LETTER XV.

TO MAURICUS.

WHAT can be more agreeable to me than the office you have enjoined me, of choosing a proper tutor for your nephews ? It gives me an opportunity of revisiting the scene of my education, and of turning back again to the most pleasing part of my life. I resume my seat, as formerly, among the young scholars ; and have the pleasure to observe the respect they pay me from the reputation I have acquired by the same studies. Accordingly, when I lately came in upon them, while

they were warmly declaiming before a very full audience of the same rank with myself; the moment I appeared they were silent. I mention this for their honour rather than my own; and to let you see the just hopes you may conceive of placing your nephews to their advantage in this seminary. I purpose to hear all the several professors; and then to write you such an account of them as will enable you, (as far as a letter can) to judge of their respective abilities. The faithful execution of this important commission, is what I owe to the friendship that subsists between us, and to the memory of your brother. Nothing, certainly, is more your concern than that his children (I would have said yours, but that I know you now look upon them even with more tenderness than your own) may be found worthy of such a father, and such an uncle: and I should have claimed a part in that care, though you had not required it of me. I am sensible, in thus selecting a preceptor, I shall draw upon me the displeasure of all the rest of that profession: but when the interest of these youths is concerned, I esteem it my duty to hazard the displeasure, or even enmity, of any man, with as much unconcern as a parent would for his own children. Farewel.

LETTER XVI.

TO CEREALIS.

You advise me to read my late speech before an assembly of my friends. I will, since it is agreeable to your opinion; though I have many scru-

ples. Compositions of this kind lose, I well know, all their fire and force, and almost even their very name, by a mere recital. It is the solemnity of the tribunal, the concourse of one's friends, the suspense of the event, the emulation between the several orators concerned, the zeal of the different parties formed amongst the audience, in a word, it is the air, the action*, the attitude of the speaker, together with all the corresponding gestures of his body, that conspire to give a spirit and grace to what he delivers. Hence those who sit when they plead, though they have most of the other advantages I have mentioned, yet, from that single circumstance, weaken the whole force of their eloquence. The eyes and hands of a reader, those important instruments of graceful elocution, being engaged, it is no wonder the attention of the hearer grows languid, while he has none of those awakening and alluring circumstances to excite it. To these general considerations, I must add this particular disadvantage, which attends the speech in question, that it is chiefly of the argumentative kind; and it is natural for an author to suspect that what he wrote with labour will not be read with pleasure. For who is there so unprejudiced, as not to prefer the flowing and florid to the close and unornamented

* Some of the Roman orators were as much too vehement in their action, as those of our country are too calm and spiritless. In the violence of their elocution they not only used all the warmth of gesture, but actually walked backwards and forwards. Quintilian mentions a witticism of Flavius Virginius, who asked one of these walking orators, *Quot millia pascuum declamasset?* "How many miles he had declaimed?"

style? It is very unreasonable there should be any distinction; however it is certain the judges generally expect one manner of pleading, and the audience another: whereas an auditor ought to be affected only with those articles which would strike him, were he in the place of the judge. Nevertheless, it is possible, the objections which lie against this piece may be surmounted, in consideration of the novelty it has to recommend it: the novelty I mean with respect to us: for the Greek orators have a method of reasoning, though upon a different occasion, not altogether unlike that which I employed. They, when they would throw out a law, as contrary to some former one unrepealed, argue by comparing those laws together; so I, on the contrary, endeavour to prove, that the crime, which I was insisting upon as falling within the intent and meaning of the law relating to public extortions, was agreeable, not only to that law, but likewise to other laws of the same nature. Those who are ignorant of the jurisprudence of their country, can have no taste for reasonings of this kind; but those who are not, ought to be so much the more favourable in the judgment they pass upon them. I shall endeavour, therefore, if you persist in my reciting it, to collect a learned audience. But before you determine this point, I entreat you thoroughly to weigh the difficulties I have laid before you, and then decide as reason shall direct: for it is reason that must justify you; obedience to your commands will be a sufficient apology for me. Farewel.

LETTER XVII.

TO CALVISIUS.

I NEVER spent my time more agreeably I think, than lately with Spurinna. I am so much pleased with the uninterrupted regularity of his way of life, that if ever I should arrive at old age, there is no man whom I would sooner choose for my model. I look upon an orderly arrangement of the affairs of life, especially at that advanced period, with the same sort of pleasure as I behold the settled course of the heavenly bodies. In youth, indeed, there is a certain deviation from precise rule, by no means unbecoming; but in age, when business is unseasonable, and ambition indecent, all should be composed and uniform. This maxim Spurinna religiously pursues throughout his whole conduct. Even in those transactions which might be called minute and inconsiderable, did they not occur every day, he observes a certain periodical season and method. The first part of the morning he devotes to study; at eight he dresses, and walks about three miles, in which he enjoys, at once, contemplation and exercise. At his return, if he has any friends with him in his house, he enters upon some entertaining and interesting topic of conversation; if he is alone, some book is read to him; and sometimes, too, even when he has visitors, if agreeable to the company. He then reposes himself; and, after this, either takes up a book, or falls into some discourse, even more entertaining and instructive. He afterwards

takes the air in his chariot, either with his wife (who is a lady of uncommon merit) or with some friend : a happiness which lately was mine. How agreeable, how delightful is the enjoyment of him in that hour of privacy ! You would fancy you were hearing some worthy of ancient times, inflaming your breast with the most heroic examples, and instructing your mind with the most exalted precepts, which, yet, he delivers with so modest an air, that it has not the least appearance of dictating. When he has thus taken a tour of about seven miles, he gets out of his chariot and walks a mile more, after which he returns home, and either reposes himself, or retires to his study. He has an excellent taste for poetry, and composes lyric odes, both in Greek and Latin, with great elegance. It is surprising what a sweet flow of numbers, and what a spirit of gaiety runs through his verses, which the venerable character of the author renders still more pleasing. When the baths are ready, which, in winter, is about three o'clock, and in summer about two, he undresses himself ; and if there happen to be no wind, he walks for some time in the sun. After this, he plays a considerable time at tennis : for, by this sort of exercise too, he combats the effects of old age. When he has bathed, he throws himself upon his couch till supper time*, and, in the mean

* This was the principal meal among the Romans, at which all their feasts and invitations were made ; they usually began it about their ninth hour, answering pretty nearly to our three o'clock in the afternoon. But as *Spurinna*, we find, did not enter upon the exercises which always preceded this meal till the eighth or ninth hour,

while, some agreeable and entertaining author is read to him. In this, as in all the rest, his friends are at full liberty to partake, or to employ themselves in any other manner more suitable to their inclination. You sit down to an elegant, yet frugal repast, which is served up in antique plate of pure silver. He has, likewise, a complete service in Corinthian metal*, which, though he admires as a curiosity, is far from being his passion. At his table, he is frequently entertained with the recital of some dramatic piece, so that even his very meals are a feast to the understanding; and though he continues at supper, even in summer, till the night is somewhat advanced, yet he prolongs the repast with so much affability and politeness, that none of his guests ever think it tedious. By this method of living, he has preserved all his senses entire, and his body active and vigorous to his 78th year, without discovering any symptoms of old age, but the wisdom. This is the sort of life which I ardently aspire after; and I purpose to enjoy it, when I shall arrive at those years which will justify a retreat from active occupations. In the mean while, I am embarrassed with a thousand affairs, in which Spurinna is at once my support and my example: for he, likewise, as long as it became him, entered into all the duties of public life. It was by passing through the various offices of the state, by governing pro-

if we allow about three hours for that purpose, he could not lie down to table till towards six or seven o'clock.

* This metal, whatever it was composed of (for that point is by no means clear), was so highly esteemed among the ancients, that they preferred it even to gold.

vinces, and by indefatigable labours, that he merited the repose he now enjoys. I propose to myself the same course and the same limits: and I here give it to you under my hand, that I do so. If an ill-timed ambition should carry me beyond those bounds, produce this letter against me; and condemn me to repose, whenever I may enjoy it without being reproached with indolence. Farewel.

LETTER XVIII.

TO HISPULIA.

IT is not easy to determine whether my love or esteem were greater, for that wise and excellent man your father; but this is most certain, that, from the respect I bear to *his* memory and your virtues, you are dear to me by the strongest sentiments of affection. Can I fail then to wish (as I shall by every means in my power endeavour) that your son may copy the virtues of both his grand-fathers, particularly his maternal? as, indeed, his father and his uncle will furnish him also with very illustrious examples. The surest method to train him up in the steps of these respectable men, is early to season his mind with polite learning and useful knowledge: and it is of the last consequence from whom he receives these instructions. Hitherto he has had his education under your eye, and in your house, where he is exposed to few, I should rather say to no wrong impressions. But he is now of an age to be sent from home, and it is time to place him with some pro-

fessor of rhetoric; of whose discipline and method, but, above all, of whose morals, you may be well satisfied. Amongst the many advantages for which this amiable youth is indebted to nature and fortune, he has that of a most beautiful person: it is necessary, therefore, in this loose and slippery age, to find out one who will not only be his tutor, but the guardian and protection of his virtue. I will venture to recommend Julius Genitor to you under that character. I love him, I confess, extremely: but my affection does by no means prejudice my judgment; on the contrary, it is, in truth, the effect of it. His behaviour is grave, and his morals irreproachable; perhaps somewhat too severe and rigid for the libertine manners of these times. His professional qualifications you may learn from many others; for the powers of eloquence, as they are open to all the world, are soon discovered; but the qualities of the heart lie more concealed, and out of the reach of common observation: it is on *that* side, therefore, I undertake to be answerable for my friend. Your son will hear nothing from this worthy man, but what will be for his advantage to know, nor learn any thing of which it would be happier he should be ignorant. He will represent to him, as often and with us much zeal as you or I should, the virtues of his ancestors, and what a glorious weight of illustrious characters he has to support. You will not hesitate, then, to place him with a tutor, whose first care will be to form his manners, and afterwards to instruct him in eloquence; an attainment ill-acquired, if with the neglect of moral improvements. Farewel,

LETTER XIX.

TO MACER.

I HAVE the pleasure to find you are so great an admirer of my uncle's works, as to wish to have a complete collection of them; and for that purpose desire me to send you an account of all the treatises he wrote. I will point them out to you in the order in which they were composed: for however immaterial *that* may seem, it is a sort of information not at all unacceptable to men of letters. The first book he published was a treatise concerning the Art of using the Javelin on Horseback; this he wrote when he commanded a troop of horse, and it is drawn up with great accuracy and judgment. The Life of Pomponius Secundus, in two volumes: Pomponius had a very great affection for him, and he thought he owed this tribute to his memory. The History of the Wars in Germany, consisting of twenty books, in which he gave an account of all the battles we were engaged in against that nation. A dream which he had, when he served in the army in Germany first suggested to him the design of this work. He imagined that Drusus Nero (who extended his conquests very far into that country, and there lost his life) appeared to him in his sleep, and conjured him not to suffer his memory to be buried in oblivion. He has left us likewise a Treatise upon Eloquence, divided into six volumes. In this work he takes the orator from his cradle, and leads him on till he has carried him up to the

highest point of perfection in this art. In the latter part of Nero's reign, when the tyranny of the times made it dangerous to engage in studies of a more free and elevated spirit, he published a piece of criticism in eight books, concerning Ambiguity in Expression. He has completed the history which Aufidius Bassus left unfinished, and has added to it thirty books. And, lastly, he has left thirty-seven books upon the subject of Natural History: this is a work of great compass and learning, and almost as full of variety as nature herself. You will wonder how a man, so engaged as he was, could find time to compose such a number of books; and some of them upon abstruse subjects. But your surprise will rise still higher, when you hear, that for some time he engaged in the profession of an advocate; that he died in his fifty-sixth year; that, from the time of his quitting the bar to his death, he was employed partly in the execution of the highest posts, and partly in a personal attendance on those emperors who honoured him with their friendship. But he had a quick apprehension, joined to unwearied application. In summer, he always began his studies as soon as it was night*; in winter, generally

* The distribution of time among the Romans was extremely different from the method in use amongst us. They measured the night into four equal parts, which they called *watches*, each containing the space of three hours; and part of these they devoted either to the pleasures of the table, or to study. The natural day they divided into twelve hours, the first beginning with sun-rise, and the last ending with sun-set; by which means their hours were of unequal length, varying according to the different seasons of the year. The time for business began with sun-rise, and continued to the fifth hour, being

at one in the morning, but never later than two, and often at midnight. No man ever spent less time in bed; insomuch that he would sometimes, without retiring from his book, take a short sleep, and then pursue his studies. Before day-break, he used to wait upon Vespasian, who likewise chose that season to transact business. When he had finished the affairs which that emperor committed to his charge, he returned home again to his studies. After a short and light repast, at noon (agreeably to the good old custom of our ancestors), he would frequently, in the summer, if disengaged from business, repose himself in the sun; during which time some author was read to him, from whence he made extracts and observations; as indeed this was his constant method whatever book he read: for it was a maxim of his, that "no book was so bad, but something might be learned from it." When this was over, he generally went into the cold bath, and as soon as he came out of it, just took a slight refreshment, and then reposed himself for a little while. Thus, as if it had been a new day, he immediately resumed his studies till supper-time, when a book was again read to him, upon which he would make some hasty remarks. I remember once his *Reader* having pronounced a word wrong, somebody at the table made him repeat it again; upon which my uncle asked his friend if he understood it?

that of dinner, which, with them, was only a slight repast. From thence to the seventh hour was a time of repose; a custom which still prevails in Italy. The eighth hour was employed in bodily exercises; after which they constantly bathed, and from thence went to supper.

who acknowledging that he did ; “ *Why then,*” said he, “ *would you make him go back again? We have lost, by this interruption, above ten lines:*” so covetous was this great man of time ! In summer he always rose from supper by day-light : and in winter, as soon as it was dark ; and he observed this rule as strictly as if it had been a law of the state. Such was his manner of life amidst the noise and hurry of the town : but in the country his whole time was devoted to study without intermission, excepting only when he bathed. In this exception, I include no more than the time he was actually in the bath ; for while he was rubbed and wiped, he was employed either in hearing some book read to him, or in dictating. In his journies he lost no time from his studies, but his mind, at those seasons, being disengaged from all other business, applied itself wholly to that single pursuit. A secretary* constantly attended him in his chariot, who, in the winter, wore a particular sort of warm gloves, that the sharpness of the weather might not occasion any interruption to my uncle’s studies : and, for the same reason, when in Rome, he was always carried in a chair. I remember he once reproved me for walking : “ You might,” said he, “ employ those hours to more advantage :” for he thought every hour lost, that was not given to study. By this extraordinary application, he found time to compose the several treatises I have mentioned, besides one hundred and sixty volumes which he left me by his will

* The word, in the original, implies a person who wrote short hand ; an art which the Romans carried to its highest perfection.

consisting of a kind of common-place, written on both sides, in a very small character; so that one might fairly reckon the number considerably more. I have heard him say, that when he was comptroller of the revenue in Spain, Largius Licinius offered him four hundred thousand sesterces for these manuscripts: and yet they were not quite so numerous. When you reflect upon the books he has read, and the volumes he has written, are you not inclined to suspect that he never was engaged in the affairs of the public, or the service of his prince? On the other hand, when you are informed how indefatigable he was in his studies, are you not disposed to wonder that he read and wrote no more? For, on one side, what obstacles would not the business of a court throw in his way? And, on the other, what is it that such intense application might not perform? I cannot but smile, therefore, when I hear myself called a studious man, who, in comparison to him, am an arrant loiterer. But why do I mention myself, who am diverted from these pursuits by numberless affairs, both public and private? Even they, whose whole lives are devoted to study, must blush to appear as mere idlers, when compared with him. I have run out my letter, I perceive, beyond the extent I at first designed, which was only to inform you, as you desired, what treatises he has left behind him. But I trust this will not be less acceptable to you than the books themselves, as it may, possibly, not only raise your curiosity to read his works, but your emulation to copy his example, by some attempts of the same nature. Farewel.

LETTER XX.

TO SEVERUS.

I HAVE lately purchased, with a legacy that was left me, a statue of Corinthian brass. It is small, indeed, but well executed, at least if I have any judgment; which, most certainly, in matters of this sort, as perhaps in all others, is extremely defective. However, I think I have a taste to discover the beauties of this figure: as it is naked, the faults, if there be any, as well as the perfections, are more observable. It represents an old man in an erect attitude. The bones, the muscles, the veins, and wrinkles, are so strongly expressed, that you would imagine the figure to be animated. The character is well preserved throughout every part of the body: the hair is thin, the forehead broad, the face shriveled, the throat lank, the arms languid, the breast fallen, and the belly sunk; as the whole turn and air of the figure behind is expressive of old age. It appears to be antique, from the colour of the brass. In short, it is a performance so highly finished, as to merit the attention of the most curious, and to afford, at the same time, pleasure to the most common observer: and this induced me, who am an absolute novice in this art, to buy it. But I did so, not with any intent of placing it in my own house (for I have nothing of that kind there), but with a design of fixing it in some conspicuous place in my native province, perhaps in the temple of Jupiter: for it is a present well worthy of a temple and a god.

I desire, therefore, you would, with that care with which you always execute my requests, give immediate orders for a pedestal to be made for it. I leave the choice of the marble to you, but let my name be engraven upon it, and, if you think proper, my titles. I will send the statue by the first opportunity ; or, possibly (which I am sure you will like better), I may bring it myself : for I intend, if I can find leisure, to make an excursion to you. This is a piece of news which I know you will rejoice to hear ; but you will soon change your countenance, when I tell you my visit will be only for a few days : for the same business that now detains me here, will prevent my making a longer stay. Farewel.

LETTER XXI.

TO CATILIUS.

I ACCEPT of your invitation to supper ; but I must make this agreement beforehand, that you dismiss me soon, and treat me frugally. Let our entertainment abound only in philosophical conversation, and even that too with moderation. There are certain offices which bring passengers into the streets at midnight, and which Cato himself could not safely fall in with ; though I must confess, at the same time, that J. Cæsar *, when he reproaches him with that circumstance, exalts the character he meant to expose : for he describes those per-

* Julius Cæsar wrote an invective against Cato of Utica, to which, it is probable, Pliny here alludes.

sons who met this reeling patriot, as blushing when they discovered who he was ; and adds, “ You would have thought that Cato had detected them, and not they Cato.” Could he place the dignity of Cato in a stronger light than by representing him thus venerable even in his cups ? As for ourselves, nevertheless, let temperance not only spread our table, but regulate our hours : for we are not arrived at so exalted a reputation, that our enemies cannot censure our conduct without applauding it at the same time. Farewel.

LETTER XXII.

TO NEPOS.

I HAVE frequently observed, that amongst the noble actions and remarkable sayings of distinguished persons in either sex, those which have been most celebrated have not always been the most worthy of admiration ; and I am confirmed in this opinion, by a conversation I had yesterday with Fannia. This lady is grand-daughter to that famous Arria, who animated her husband to meet death, by her own glorious example. She informed me of several particulars relating to Arria, not less heroical than this applauded action of her's, though less the subject of general renown ; and which, I am persuaded, will raise her as much in your admiration as they did in mine. Her husband, Cæcinna Pætus, and her son, were each attacked at the same time with a dangerous illness, of which the son died. This youth, who had a

most beautiful person and amiable behaviour, was not less endeared to his parents by his virtues than by the ties of affection. His mother managed his funeral so privately, that Pætus did not know of his death. Whenever she came into his bed-chamber, she pretended her son was better; and, as often as he inquired concerning his health, she answered, he had rested well, or had eaten with an appetite. When she found she could no longer restrain her grief, but her tears were gushing out, she would leave the room, and, having given vent to her passion, return again with dry eyes, and a serene countenance, as if she had dismissed every sentiment of sorrow at her entrance. Her resolution*, no doubt, was truly noble, when, drawing the dagger, she plunged it in her breast, and then presented it to her husband with that ever-memorable, I had almost said that divine expression, "Pætus, it is not painful." It must, however, be considered, when she spoke and acted thus, she was encouraged and supported by the prospect

* The story, as mentioned by several of the ancient historians, is to this purpose: Pætus having joined Scribonianus, who was in arms, in Illyria, against Claudius, was taken after the death of the latter, and condemned to death. Arria, having, in vain, solicited his life, persuaded him to destroy himself, rather than suffer the ignominy of falling by the executioner's hands; and, in order to encourage him to an act, to which, it seems, he was not much inclined, she set him the example in the manner Pliny relates.

In a pleasure-house belonging to the *Villa Ludovico*, at Rome, there is a fine statue representing this action: Pætus is stabbing himself with one hand, and holds up the dying Arria with the other. Her sinking body hangs so loose, as if every joint were relaxed.

of immortal glory. But was it not something much greater, without the aid of such animating motives, to hide her tears, to conceal her grief, and cheerfully act the mother when she was a mother no more?

Scribonianus had taken up arms in Illyria against Claudius, where, having lost his life, Pætus, who was of his party, was brought prisoner to Rome. When they were going to put him on board a ship, Arria besought the soldiers that she might be permitted to attend him: "Certainly," said she, "you cannot refuse a man of consular dignity, as he is, a few slaves to wait upon him; but, if you will take me, I alone will perform their office." Her request was refused; upon which she hired a small fishing-vessel, and boldly ventured to follow the ship. At her return to Rome, she met the wife of Scribonianus, in the emperor's palace, who, pressing her to discover all she knew of that insurrection, "What," said she, "shall I regard thy advice, who sawest thy husband murdered even in thy very arms, and yet survivest him?" An expression which evinces, that the glorious manner in which she put an end to her life, was no unpremeditated effect of sudden passion. When Thræsea, who married her daughter, was dissuading her from her purpose of destroying herself, and, among other arguments, said to her, "Would you then advise your daughter to die with me, if my life were to be taken from me?" "Most certainly I would," she replied, "if she had lived as long and in as much harmony with you, as I have with my Pætus." This answer greatly heightened the alarm of her family, and

made them observe her for the future more narrowly ; which, when she perceived, she assured them all their caution would be to no purpose. “ You may oblige me,” said she, “ to execute my resolution in a way that will give me more pain, but it is impossible you should prevent it.” She had scarce said this, when she sprang from her chair, and running her head with the utmost violence against the wall, fell down in appearance dead : but being brought to herself, “ I told you,” said she, “ if you would not suffer me to take an easy path to death, I should make my way to it through some more difficult passage.” Now, is there not, my friend, something much greater in all this, than in the so-much-talked-of, *Pætus, it is not painful?* to which, indeed, it seems to have led the way : and yet this last is the favourite topic of fame, while all the former are passed over in profound silence. Whence I cannot but infer, what I observed in the beginning of my letter, that the noblest actions are not always the most celebrated. Farewel.

LETTER XXIII:

TO FABATUS.

You have long desired a visit from your granddaughter*, accompanied by me. Nothing, be assured, could be more agreeable to us both ; for we equally wish to see you, and are determined to delay that pleasure no longer. For this purpose

* Calphurnia, Pliny's wife.

our baggage is actually making ready, and we are hastening to you with all the expedition the roads will permit. We shall stop only once, and that for a short time ; intending to turn a little out of the way in order to go into 'Tuscany : not for the sake of looking upon our estate, and into our family concerns, for that we could defer to another opportunity, but to perform an indispensable duty. There is a town near my estate, called *Tifernum-upon-the-Tiber* *, which put itself under my patronage when I was yet a youth. These people enter warmly into my interest ; celebrate my arrival among them with public rejoicings ; express the greatest concern when I leave them ; and, in short, give every proof of an affection towards me as strong as it is undeserved. That I may return their good offices (for what generous mind can bear to be excelled in acts of friendship ?) I have erected a temple in this place, at my own expense ; and, as it is finished, it would be a sort of impiety to delay the dedication of it any longer. We design, therefore, to be present on the day that ceremony is to be performed ; and I have resolved to celebrate it with a general feast. We may possibly continue there all the next day, but we shall make so much the more expedition in our journey afterwards. May we have the happiness to find you and your daughter in good health ! in good spirits I am sure we shall, if you should see us safely arrived. Farewel.

* Now Citta di Castello.

LETTER XXIV.

TO ANTONINUS.

THAT you have twice enjoyed the dignity of consul, with a conduct equal to that of our most illustrious ancestors ; that few (your modesty will not suffer me to say none) ever have, or ever will, come up to the integrity and wisdom of your Asiatic administration ; that in virtue, in authority, and even in years, you are the first of Romans ; these, most certainly, are shining and noble parts of your character ; nevertheless, I own it is in your retired hours that I most admire you. To season the severity of business with the sprightliness of wit, and to temper wisdom with politeness, is as difficult as it is great ; yet, these uncommon qualities you have most happily united in those wonderful charms which grace both your conversation and your writings. Your lips, like the venerable old man's in Homer, drop honey ; and one would imagine the bee had diffused her sweetness over all you compose. These were the sentiments impressed upon me, when I lately read your Greek epigrams and satires. What elegance, what beauties, shine in this collection ! How sweetly the numbers flow, and how exactly are they wrought up in the true spirit of the ancients ! What a vein of wit runs through every line, and how conformable is the whole to the rules of just criticism ! I fancied I had in my hands Callimachus or Hesiod, or, if possible, some poet even superior to these : though, indeed, neither of those

authors excelled, as you have, in both those species of poetry. Is it possible, that a Roman can write Greek in so much perfection? I protest I do not believe Athens herself can be more attic. In short, I cannot but envy Greece the honour of your preference: and since you can write thus elegantly in a foreign language, it does not rest upon conjecture what you could have performed in your own. Farewel.

LETTER XXV.

TO NASO.

A STORM of hail, I am informed, has destroyed all the produce of my estate in Tuscany; while that which I have on the other side of the Po, though it has proved extremely fruitful this season, yet, from the excessive cheapness of every thing, turns to small account. Laurentinum is the single possession which yields me any advantage. I have nothing there, indeed, but a house and gardens; all the rest is barren sands; still, however, my best productions rise at Laurentinum. It is there I cultivate, if not my lands, at least my mind, and employ much of my time in writing. As, in other parts of my estate, I can shew you full barns; so here I can entertain you with good store of the literary kind. Let me advise you then, if you wish for a fertile and never-failing possession, to purchase some spot upon this studious and contemplative coast. Farewel.

LETTER XXVI.

TO CORNELIUS TACITUS.

I REJOICE that you are safely arrived in Rome ; for though I am always desirous to see you, I am more particularly so now. I purpose to continue a few days longer at my house at Tusculum, in order to finish a work which I have upon my hands. For I am afraid, should I put a stop to this design, now that it is so nearly completed, I shall find it difficult to resume it. In the mean while, that I may lose no time, I send this letter before me to request a favour of you, which I hope shortly to ask in person. But before I inform you what my request is, I must let you into the occasion of it. Being lately at Comum, the place of my nativity, a young lad, son to one of my neighbours, made me a visit. I asked him whether he studied rhetoric, and where ? he told me he did, and at Mediolanum*. And why not here ? “ Because (said his father, who came with him) we have no professors.”—“ No !” said I ; “ surely it nearly concerns you who are fathers (and very opportunely several of the company were), that your sons should receive their education here, rather than any where else. For, where can they be placed more agreeably than in their own country, or instructed with more safety and less expense than at home and under the eye of their parents ? Upon what very easy terms might you, by a general contribution, procure proper

* Milan.

masters, if you would only apply, towards the raising a salary for them, the extraordinary expense you sustain for your sons' journies, lodgings, and for whatever else you pay in consequence of their being educated at a distance from home; as pay you must, for every article of every kind. Though I have no children myself, yet I shall willingly contribute to a design so beneficial to my native country, which I consider as my child or my parent; and, therefore, I will advance a third part of any sum you should think proper to raise for this purpose. I would take upon myself the whole expense, were I not apprehensive that my benefaction might hereafter be abused and perverted to private ends; which I have observed to be the case in several places where public foundations of this nature have been established. The only way to prevent this mischief is, to leave the choice of the professors entirely in the breast of the parents; who will be so much the more careful whom they elect, as they will be obliged to share the expense of their stipend. For though they may be negligent in disposing of another's bounty, they will certainly be cautious how they apply their own; and will see that none but those who deserve it shall receive my money, when they must, at the same time, receive theirs too. Let my example then encourage you to unite heartily in this useful design; and be assured, the greater the sum my proportion shall amount to, the more agreeable it will be to me. You can undertake nothing that will be more advantageous to your children, nor more acceptable to your country. Your sons will, by these means, receive their edu-

cation where they received their birth, and be accustomed, from their infancy, to inhabit and affect their native soil. May you be able to procure professors of such distinguished abilities, that the neighbouring towns shall be glad to draw their learning from hence ; and, as you now send your children to foreigners for education, may foreigners in their turn, flock hither for their instruction !”

I thought proper thus to lay open to you the principles upon which this scheme turns, that you might be the more sensible how agreeable it will be to me, if you undertake the office I request. I entreat you, therefore, with all the earnestness a matter of so much importance deserves, to look out, amongst the great numbers of men of letters whom the reputation of your genius brings to you, proper persons to whom we may apply for this purpose ; but without entering into any agreement with them on my part. For I would leave it entirely free to the parents to judge and choose as they shall see proper : all the share I pretend to claim is, that of contributing my assistance and my money. If, therefore, any one shall be found who thinks himself qualified for the office, he may repair thither : but without relying upon any thing but his merit. Farewel.

LETTER XXVII.

TO VALERIUS PAULINUS.

REJOICE with me, my friend, not only upon my account, but your own, and that of the public ; for

rhetoric is still held in honour. Being lately engaged to plead in a cause before the centumviri, the crowd was so great that I could not get to my place, without passing through the tribunal where the judges sat. And I have this flattering circumstance to add farther, that a young nobleman having lost his robe in the press, stood in his vest to hear me during the seven hours I was speaking: and my success was equal to the great fatigue I sustained. Come on then, my friend, and let us earnestly pursue our studies, nor screen our own indolence under pretence of that of the public. Never, we may rest assured, will there be wanting hearers and readers, so long as we can supply them with orators and authors worthy of their attention. Farewel.

LETTER XXVIII.

TO GALLUS.

You acquaint me that Cæcilius, the consul elect, has commenced a suit against Correllia, and earnestly beg me to undertake her cause in her absence. As I have reason to thank you for your information, so I have to complain of your entreaties; without the first, indeed, I should have been ignorant of this affair, but the last was unnecessary, as I want no solicitations to comply, where it would be ungenerous in me to refuse; for can I hesitate a moment to take upon myself the protection of a daughter of Correllius? It is true, indeed, though there is no particular intimacy

between her adversary and me, we are, however, upon good terms. It is true, likewise, that he is a person of great rank, and who has a claim to particular regard from me, as he is entering upon an office which I have had the honour to fill ; and it is natural for a man to be desirous those dignities should be treated with the highest respect, which he himself once possessed. Yet, these considerations have little weight, when I reflect that it is the daughter of Correllius whom I am to defend. The memory of that excellent person, than whom this age has not produced a man of greater dignity, rectitude, and good sense, is indelibly impressed upon my mind. I admired him before I was acquainted with him ; and, contrary to what is usually the case, my esteem increased in proportion as I knew him better ; indeed, I knew him thoroughly, for he treated me without reserve, and admitted me to share in his joys and his sorrows, in his gay and his serious hours. When I was but a youth he esteemed, and (I will even venture to say) revered me as if I had been, in every respect, his equal. When I solicited any post of honour, he supported me with his interest, and recommended me by his testimony ; when I obtained it, he was my introducer, and my attendant ; when I exercised it, he was my guide and my counsellor. In a word, wherever my interest was concerned, he exerted himself with as much zeal and alacrity as if he had possessed all his former health and vigour. In private, in public, and with the emperor, how often has he advanced and supported my credit and interest ! It happened once, that the conversation before the emperor Nerva turned

upon the hopeful young men of that time, and several of the company were pleased to mention me with applause; he sat for a little while silent, which gave what he said the greater weight; and then, with that air of dignity to which you are no stranger, "*I must be reserved,*" said he, "*in my praises of Pliny, because he does nothing without my advice.*" By which single sentence he gave me a greater character than I could presume even to aspire to; as he represented my conduct to be always such as wisdom must approve, since it was wholly under the guidance of one of the wisest of men. Even in his last moments, he said to his daughter (as she often mentions), "*I have, in the course of a long life, raised up many friends to you; but there is none in whom you may more assuredly confide, than Pliny and Cornutus:*" a circumstance I cannot reflect upon, without being deeply sensible how much it is incumbent upon me to endeavour to act up to the opinion so excellent a judge of mankind conceived of me. I shall, therefore, most readily give my assistance to Correllia in this affair, and willingly hazard any displeasure I may incur by appearing in her cause. Though I should imagine, if, in the course of my pleadings, I should find an opportunity to explain and enforce, more at large than I can in a letter, the reasons I have here mentioned, and upon which I rest at once my apology and my glory; her adversary (whose suit may, perhaps, as you say, be entirely unprecedented, as it is against a *woman*) will not only excuse, but approve my conduct. Farewel.

LETTER XXIX.

TO HISPULLA.

As you are an exemplary instance of tender regard to your family in general, and to your late excellent brother in particular, whose affection you returned with equal warmth; and have not only shewn the kindness of an aunt, but supplied the loss of a tender parent to his daughter* ; you will hear, I am persuaded, with the greatest pleasure, that she behaves worthy of her father, her grandfather, and yourself. She possesses an excellent understanding, together with consummate prudence, and gives the strongest testimony of the purity of her heart, by her fondness for her husband. Her affection to me has given her a turn to books ; and my compositions, which she takes a pleasure in reading, and even in getting by heart, are continually in her hands. How full of tender solicitude is she, when I am going to speak in any cause ! How kindly does she rejoice when I have happily discharged the office ! While I am pleading, she places persons to inform her from time to time how I am heard, what applauses I receive, and what success attends the cause. When, at any time, I recite my works, she conceals herself behind some curtain, and, with secret rapture, enjoys my praises. She sings my verses to her lyre, with no other master but love, the best instructor, for her guide. From these happy circumstances, I derive my most assured hopes, that

* Calphurnia, Pliny's wife.

the harmony between us will increase with our days, and be as lasting as our lives. For it is not my youth or my person, which time gradually impairs; it is my character and my glory of which she is enamoured. But what less could be expected from one who was trained by your hands, and formed by your instructions; who was early familiarized under your roof with all that is worthy and amiable, and was first taught to conceive an affection for me, by the advantageous colours in which you were pleased to represent me? As you revered my mother with all the respect due even to a parent, so you kindly directed and encouraged my tender years; presaging, from that early period, all that my wife now fondly imagines I really am. Accept, therefore, of our united thanks, that you thus, as it were designedly, formed us for each other. Farewel.

LETTER XXX.

TO VELIUS CEREALIS.

How severe a fate has attended the daughters of Helvidius! These two sisters are both dead in child-bed, after having each of them been delivered of a girl. This misfortune pierces me with the sharpest sorrow; as, indeed, to see two such amiable young women fall a sacrifice to their fruitfulness in the prime and flower of their years, is a misfortune which I cannot too deeply lament. I lament for the unhappy condition of the poor infants, who are thus become orphans from their

birth: I lament for the sake of the disconsolate husbands of these ladies; and I lament, too, for my own. The affection I bear to the memory of their late father is inviolable, as my defence of him in the senate, and as all my writings witness. Of three children which survived him, there remains but one; and his family, which had lately so many noble supports, now rests upon a single person! It will, however, be a considerable mitigation of my affliction, if fortune should, at least, kindly spare *him*, and render him worthy of his father and grandfather*: and I am so much the more anxious for his welfare and good conduct, as he is the only branch of the family remaining. You know the softness and solicitude of my heart where I have any tender attachments: you will not wonder then, that I have many fears, where I have many hopes. Farewel.

LETTER XXXI.

TO VALENS.

BEING engaged lately in a cause before the centumviri, it occurred to me that when I was a young man, I had also pleaded in the same court.

* The famous Helvidius Priscus, who signalized himself in the senate, by the freedom of his speeches in favour of liberty, during the reigns of Galba, Otho, Vitellius, and Vespasian. In the reign of the latter, he was put to death by the order of the senate, though contrary to the inclination of the emperor, who countermanded the execution; but it was too late, the executioner having performed his office before the messenger arrived. Tacitus

I could not forbear, as usual, to pursue the reflection, and to consider if there were any of those advocates then present, who were joined with me in the former cause, but I found I was the only person remaining who had been counsel in both; such changes does the instability of human nature, or the vicissitudes of fortune, produce! Death had removed some; banishment others; age and infirmities had silenced those, while these were withdrawn to enjoy the happiness of retirement; one was at the head of an army; and the indulgence of the prince has exempted another from the burthen of civil employments. What turns of fortune have I experienced even in my own person! It was the cultivation of my talents for oratory that first raised me into notice; it was the same talents that afterwards occasioned my disgrace; and it is the same talents that have advanced me again. The friendships of the wise and good, at my first appearance in the world, were highly serviceable to me; the same friendships proved afterwards extremely prejudicial to my interest, and now they are my ornament and support. If you compute the time in which these revolutions have happened, it is but a few years; if you number the incidents, it seems an age: and it is a lesson that will teach us to check both our despair and our presumption, when we observe such a variety of events rapidly revolving in so narrow a circle. It is my custom to communicate

represents him as acting in all the various duties of social life with one consistent tenor of uniform virtue, superior to all temptations of wealth, of inflexible integrity, and unbroken fortitude.

to my friend all my thoughts, and to set before him the same reflections and examples by which I regulate my own conduct: and such is the purpose of the present letter. Farewel.

LETTER XXXII.

TO LICINIUS.

I HAVE brought you, as a present out of the country, a query which well deserves the consideration of your extensive knowledge. There is a spring which rises in a neighbouring mountain, and, running among the rocks, is received into a little banquetting-room, from whence, after the force of its current is a little restrained, it falls into the Larian Lake. The nature of this spring is extremely surprising; it ebbs and flows regularly three times a-day. The increase and decrease is plainly visible, and very amusing to observe. You sit down by the side of the fountain, and, whilst you are taking a repast, and drinking its water, which is extremely cool, you see it gradually rise and fall. If you place a ring, or any thing else, at the bottom, when it is dry, the stream reaches it by degrees, till it is entirely covered, and then gently retires; and, if you wait, you may see it thus alternately advance and recede three times successively. Shall we say that some secret current of air stops and opens the fountain-head, as it approaches to or retires from it, as we see in bottles, and other vessels of that nature, where there is not a free and open passage,

though you turn their necks downwards, yet the outward air obstructing the vent, they discharge their contents as it were by starts? Or may it not be accounted for upon the same principle as the flux and reflux of the sea? or as those rivers which discharge themselves into the sea, meeting with contrary winds and the swell of the ocean, are forced back into their channels; so may there not be something that checks this fountain, for a time, in its progress? Or is there rather a certain reservoir that contains these waters in the bowels of the earth, which, while it is recruiting its discharges, the stream flows more slowly, and in less quantity; but when it has collected its due measure, it runs again in its usual strength and fulness? Or, lastly, is there I know not what kind of subterraneous counter-poise, that throws up the water when the fountain is dry, and stops it when it is full? You, who are so well qualified for the inquiry, will examine the reasons * of this wonderful phænomenon; it will be sufficient for me, if I have given you a clear description of it. Farewel.

LETTER XXXIII.

TO MAXIMUS.

I AM deeply afflicted with the news I have received of the death of Fannius, not only as having

* There are several of these periodical fountains in different parts of the world, as we have some in England. *Laywell*, near *Torbay*, is mentioned in the *Philosophical Transactions* to ebb and flow several times every hour.

lost in him a friend whose eloquence and polite manners I admired, but a guide also by whose judgment I was often directed; as, indeed, he possessed a most penetrating genius, improved and enlightened by great experience. There are some circumstances attending his death, which aggravate my concern: he left behind him a will which had been made a considerable time before his decease, by which it happens that his estate is fallen into the hands of those who had incurred his displeasure, whilst his greatest favourites are excluded. But what I particularly regret is, that he has left unfinished a very noble work in which he was engaged. Notwithstanding his full employment at the bar, he had commenced a history of those persons who were put to death or banished by Nero; and had completed three books. They are written with great elegance and precision; the style is pure, and preserves a proper medium between the simple narrative and the historical: and as they were very favourably received by the public, he was the more desirous of being able to finish the remainder. The hand of death is ever, in my opinion, too severe and too sudden, when it falls upon such as are employed in some immortal work. The sons of sensuality, who have no views beyond the present hour, terminate with each day the whole purpose of their existence; but those who look forward to posterity, and endeavour to transmit their names with honour to future generations, by useful labours;—to such, death is always immature, as it ever snatches them from amidst some unfinished design. Fannius, long before his death, had a strong presentiment

of what has happened : he dreamed one night, that, as he was sitting in his study with his manuscript before him, Nero entered, and, placing himself by his side, took up the three first books of this history, which he read through, and then departed. This dream greatly alarmed him, and he looked upon it as an intimation that he should not carry on this history any farther than Nero had read, and so the event has proved. I cannot reflect upon this accident, without lamenting that he was prevented from accomplishing a work, which had cost him so many painful vigils, as it suggests to me, at the same time, reflections on my own mortality, and the fate of my writings : and I am persuaded the same apprehensions alarm you for those in which you are at present employed. Let us then, my friend, while yet we live, exert all our endeavours, that death, whenever it shall arrive, may find as little as possible to destroy. Farewel.

LETTER XXXIV.

TO APOLLINARIS.

THE kind concern you expressed when you heard of my design to pass the summer at my villa* in Tuscany, and your obliging endeavours to dissuade me from going to a place which you think unhealthy, are extremely pleasing to me. I confess, the atmosphere of that part of Tuscany, which

* This was Pliny's principal seat, lying about one hundred and fifty miles from Rome, and in which he usually resided during the summer season.

lies towards the coast, is thick and unwholesome : but my house is situated at a great distance from the sea, under one of the Appennine mountains, which, of all others, is most esteemed for the clearness of its air. But that you may be relieved from all apprehensions on my account, I will give you a description of the temperature of the climate, the situation of the country, and the beauty of my villa, which I am persuaded you will read with as much pleasure as I shall relate. The winters are severe and cold, so that myrtles, olives, and trees of that kind which delight in constant warmth, will not flourish here ; but it produces bay-trees* in great perfection ; yet sometimes, though indeed not oftener than in the neighbourhood of Rome, they are killed by the severity of the seasons. The summers are exceedingly temperate, and continually attended with refreshing breezes, which are seldom interrupted by high winds. If you were to come here and see the numbers of old men who have lived to be grand-fathers and great grand-fathers, and hear the stories they can entertain you with of their ancestors, you would fancy yourself born in some former age. The disposition of the country is the most beautiful that can be imagined : figure to yourself an immense amphitheatre ; but such as the hand of nature only could form. Before you lies a vast extended plain, bounded by a range of mountains, whose summits are covered with lofty

* In the original it is *laurus*, which the ingenious Mr. Martyn, professor of botany in Cambridge, has given very strong reasons for believing is not the same tree with our laurel, but the bay-tree.

and venerable woods, which supply variety of game: from thence, as the mountains decline, they are adorned with underwoods. Intermixed with these, are little hills of so strong and fat a soil, that it would be difficult to find a single stone upon them; their fertility is nothing inferior to the lowest grounds; and though their harvest, indeed, is somewhat later, their crops are as well matured. At the foot of these hills the eye is presented, wherever it turns, with one unbroken view of numberless vineyards, terminated by a border, as it were, of shrubs. From thence you have a prospect of the adjoining fields and meadows below. The soil of the former is so extremely stiff, and, upon the first ploughing, turns up in such vast clods, that it is necessary to go over it nine several times, with the largest oxen and the strongest ploughs, before they can be thoroughly broken; whilst the enamelled meadows produce trefoil, and other kinds of herbage, as fine and tender as if it were but just sprung up, being continually refreshed by never-failing rills. But though the country abounds with great plenty of water, there are no marshes; for, as it lies upon a rising ground, whatever water it receives without absorbing, runs off into the Tiber. This river, which winds through the middle of the meadows, is navigable only in the winter and spring, at which seasons it transports the produce of the lands to Rome: but its channel is so extremely low in summer, that it scarcely deserves the name of a river; towards the autumn, however, it begins again to renew its claim to that title. You could not be more agreeably entertained, than by taking

a view of the face of this country from the top of one of our neighbouring mountains: you would suppose that not a real, but some imaginary landscape, painted by the most exquisite pencil, lay before you: such an harmonious variety of beautiful objects meets the eye, which way soever it turns. My villa is so advantageously situated, that it commands a full view of all the country round; yet you approach it by so insensible a rise, that you find yourself upon an eminence, without perceiving you ascended. Behind, but at a great distance, stands the Appennine mountains. In the calmest days we are refreshed by the winds that blow from thence, but so spent, as it were, by the long tract of land they travel over, that they are entirely divested of all their strength and violence before they reach us. The exposition of the principal front of the house is full south, and seems to invite the afternoon sun in summer (but somewhat earlier in winter) into a spacious and well-proportioned portico, consisting of several members, particularly a porch built in the ancient manner. In the front of the portico is a sort of terrace, embellished with various figures, and bounded with a box hedge, from whence you descend by an easy slope, adorned with the representation of divers animals, in box, answering alternately to each other, into a lawn overspread with the soft, I had almost said the liquid, *Acanthus* * :

* Sir William Temple supposes the *acanthus* of the ancients to be what we call *pericanthe*. Modern botanists term it garden bears-foot; but Mr. Castel, in his observations upon this passage, with more probability imagines, by its character here, that it resembles moss.

this is surrounded by a walk * enclosed with ton-sile ever-greens, shaped into a variety of forms. Beyond it is the gestatio, laid out in the form of a circus †, ornamented in the middle with box cut in numberless different figures, together with a plantation of shrubs, prevented by the sheers from shooting up too high: the whole is fenced in with a wall covered by box, rising by different ranges to the top. On the outside of the wall lies a meadow that owes as many beauties to nature, as all I have been describing *within* does to art: at the end of which are several other meadows and fields interspersed with thickets. At the extremity of this portico stands a grand dining-room, which opens upon one end of the terrace; as from the windows there is a very extensive prospect over the meadows up into the country, from whence you also have a view of the terrace, and such parts of the house which project forward, together with the woods inclosing the adjacent

* This walk is called in the original *ambulatio*, as what I have ventured to translate a terrace, is by Pliny termed *xystus*. The *ambulatio* seems to be what we properly call a walk; the *gestatio* was a place appropriated to the taking of exercise in their vehicles; and the *xystus*, in its original signification, according to the definition given by Vitruvius, was a large portico, wherein the athletic exercises were performed; though it is plainly used in this place for an open walk, ornamented much in the manner of our old-fashioned parterres; but its being raised above the walks which lay in the front, seems to justify its being called a terrace.

† The Circus was a place set apart for the celebration of several public games, particularly the chariot-race. Its form was generally oblong, having a wall quite round, with ranges of seats for the convenience of spectators.

hippodrome*. Opposite almost to the centre of the portico, stands a square edifice, which encompasses a small area, shaded by four plane-trees, in the midst of which a fountain rises, from whence the water, running over the edges of a marble bason, gently refreshes the surrounding plane-trees, and the verdure underneath them. This apartment consists of a bed-chamber, secured from every kind of noise, and which the light itself cannot penetrate; together with a common dining-room, which I use when I have none but intimate friends with me. A second portico looks upon this little area, and has the same prospect with the former I just now described. There is besides another room, which, being situated close to the nearest plane-tree, enjoys a constant shade and verdure : its sides are incrustcd half-way with carved marble ; and from thence to the ceiling a foliage is painted with birds intermixed among the branches, which has an effect altogether as agreeable as that of the carving : while at the basis is a little fountain, which, playing through several small pipes into a vase, produces a most pleasing murmur. From a corner of this portico you enter into a very spacious chamber, opposite to the grand dining-room, which, from some of its windows, has a view of the terrace, and from others, of the meadow ; as those in the front look upon a cascade, which entertains at once both the eye and the ear ; for the water, dashing from a great height, foams over the marble bason that receives it below. This room is extremely warm in winter, being much

* A part of the garden, so called.

exposed to the sun; and in a cloudy day, the heat of an adjoining stove very well supplies his absence. From hence you pass through a spacious and pleasant undressing-room into the cold-bath-room, in which is a large gloomy bath: but if you are disposed to swim more at large, or in warmer water, in the middle of the area is a wide bason for that purpose, and near it a reservoir from whence you may be supplied with cold water to brace yourself again, if you should perceive you are too much relaxed by the warm. Contiguous to the cold-bath is another of a moderate degree of heat, which enjoys the kindly warmth of the sun, but not so intensely as that of the hot-bath, which projects farther. This last consists of three divisions, each of different degrees of heat: the two former lie entirely open to the sun; the latter, though not so much exposed to its rays, receives an equal share of its light. Over the undressing-room is built the tennis-court, which, by means of particular circles*, admits of different kinds of games. Not far from the baths, is the stair-case leading to the inclosed portico, after you have first passed through three apartments: one of these looks upon the little area with the four plane-trees round it; the other has a sight of

* The circles were probably no other than particular marks made on the floor, the success of their play depending on the ball's lighting in such a circle after it had been struck, which it was the adversaries' business to prevent; and the many sorts of exercises this room was made for, might be diversified by lines or circles on the walls or floor; like the game of tennis, which, though it takes up one entire room, may serve for several games of the like nature.

the meadows; and from the third you have a view of several vineyards; so that they have as many different prospects as expositions. At one end of the inclosed portico, and, indeed, taken off from it, is a chamber that looks upon the hippodrome, the vineyards, and the mountains; adjoining is a room which has a full exposure to the sun, especially in winter; and from whence runs an apartment that connects the hippodrome with the house: such is the form and aspect of the front. On the side, rises an inclosed summer portico, which has not only a prospect of the vineyards, but seems almost contiguous to them. From the middle of this portico, you enter a dining-room, cooled by the salutary breezes from the Appennine valleys; from the windows in the back front, which are extremely large, there is a prospect of the vineyards; as you have also another view of them from the folding-doors, through the summer-portico. Along that side of this dining-room, where there are no windows, runs a private staircase for the greater conveniency of serving at entertainments: at the farther end is a chamber from whence the eye is pleased with a view of the vineyards, and (what is not less agreeable) of the portico. Underneath this room is an inclosed portico, somewhat resembling a grotto, which, enjoying in the midst of the summer heats its own natural coolness, neither admits nor wants the refreshment of external breezes. After you have passed both these porticos, at the end of the dining-room stands a third, which, as the day is more or less advanced, serves either for winter or sum-

mer use. It leads to two different apartments, one containing four chambers, the other three; each enjoying, by turns, both sun and shade. In the front of these agreeable buildings, lies a very spacious hippodrome*, entirely open in the middle, by which means the eye, upon your first entrance, takes in its whole extent at one glance. It is encompassed on every side with plane-trees, covered with ivy†, so that while their heads flourish with their own foliage, their bodies enjoy a borrowed verdure; and thus, the ivy twining round the trunk and branches, spreads from tree to tree, and connects them together. Between each plane-tree are planted box-trees, and behind these, bay-trees, which blend their shade with that of the planes. This plantation, forming a straight boundary on both sides of the hippodrome, bends at the farther end into a semi-circle, which being set round and sheltered with cypress-trees, varies the prospect, and casts a deeper gloom; while

* The hippodromus, in its proper signification, was a place among the Grecians, set apart for horse-racing and other exercises of that kind. But it seems here to be nothing more than a particular walk, to which Pliny, perhaps, gave that name, from its bearing some resemblance in its form to the public places so called.

† “What the *hederæ* were, that deserved a place in a garden (says sir William Temple, in his Essay on Gardening), I cannot guess, unless they had sorts of ivy unknown to us.” But it does not seem necessary to have recourse to that supposition; for there are two sorts among us, which are very beautiful plants, the one called the silver-striped ivy, the other the yellow variegated ivy. The former, perhaps, is the *palentes hederæ* of Virgil; which epithet some of the critics, not attending to the different kinds of ivy, have injudiciously changed for *palantes*.

the inward circular walks (for there are several) enjoying an open exposure, are perfumed with roses, and correct, by a very pleasing contrast, the coolness of the shade with the warmth of the sun. Having passed through these several winding alleys, you enter a straight walk *, which breaks out into a variety of others, divided by box hedges. In one place you have a little meadow ; in another the box is cut into a thousand different forms † ; sometimes into letters, expressing the name of the master ; sometimes that of the artificer ; whilst here and there little obelisks rise intermixed alternately with fruit-trees : when, on a sudden, in the midst of this elegant regularity, you are surprised with an imitation of the negligent beauties of rural nature : in the centre of which lies a spot surrounded with a knot of dwarf plane-trees ‡. Beyond these is a walk planted

* Here seems to begin what we properly call the garden, and is the only description of a Roman one, which has come down to us. Virgil, indeed, mentions that of his Corycian friend's, but he only gives an account of the plants which that contented old man cultivated, without describing the form in which this little spot was laid out.

† It is very remarkable, that this false taste in gardening, so justly rejected by modern improvements in that agreeable art, was introduced among the Romans at a time when one should little expect to meet with any inelegancies in the polite refinements of life. Marius, the friend of Julius Cæsar, and peculiar favourite of Augustus (of whom there is still extant a letter to Cicero, greatly admired for the beauty of its sentiments and expression), is said to have first taught his countrymen this monstrous method of distorting nature, by cutting trees into regular forms.

‡ The plane tree was much cultivated among the Romans, upon account of its extraordinary shade, and they

with the smooth and twining acanthus*, where the trees are also cut into a variety of names and shapes. At the upper end is an alcove of white marble, shaded with vines, supported by four small Carystian pillars†. From this bench the water gushing through several little pipes, as if it were pressed out by the weight of the persons who repose themselves upon it, falls into a stone cistern underneath, from whence it is received into a fine polished marble bason, so artfully contrived, that it is always full without ever overflowing. When I sup here, this bason serves for a table, the larger sort of dishes being placed round the margin, while the smaller ones swim about in the form of little vessels and water-fowl. Corresponding to this, is a fountain which is incessantly emptying and filling; for the water, which it throws up to a great height, falling back into it, is, by means of two openings, returned as fast as it is received. Fronting the alcove (and which reflects as great an ornament to it, as it borrows from it) stands a summer-house of exquisite marble, the doors

used to nourish it with wine instead of water, believing, as Sir William Temple observes, "This tree loved that liquor, as well as those who used to drink under its shade."

* It is probable the acanthus here mentioned, is not the same plant with that described above; it is certain, at least, there were different sorts of them.

† This marble came from Carystus (now called Caristo) in Eubœa, an island in the Archipelago, which has since changed its name into Negroponte. From hence, likewise, it is said, the Romans fetched that famous stone, out of which they spun a sort of incombustible cloth, wherein they wrapped the bodies of their dead, and thereby preserved their ashes distinct and unmixed with those of the funeral pile.

whereof project and open into a green inclosure ; as from its upper and lower windows the eye is presented with a variety of different verdures. Next to this is a little private recess (which, though it seems distinct, may be laid into the same room) furnished with a couch ; and, notwithstanding it has windows on every side, yet it enjoys a very agreeable gloominess, by means of a spreading vine which climbs to the top, and entirely overshades it. Here you may recline and fancy yourself in a wood ; with this difference only, that you are not exposed to the weather. In this place a fountain also rises and instantly disappears : in different quarters are disposed several marble-seats, which serve, no less than the summer-house, as so many reliefs after one is wearied with walking. Near each seat is a little fountain ; and, throughout the whole hippodrome, several small rills run murmuring along, wheresoever the hand of art thought proper to conduct them, watering here and there different spots of verdure, and, in their progress, refreshing the whole.

And now, I should not have hazarded the imputation of being too minute in this detail, if I had not proposed to lead you into every corner of my house and gardens. You will hardly, I imagine, think it a trouble to read the description of a place, which, I am persuaded, would please you were you to see it ; especially as you have it in your power to stop, and, by throwing aside my letter, sit down as it were and rest yourself as often as you think proper. I had, at the same time, a view to my own gratification : as I confess I have a very great affection for this villa, which

was chiefly built or finished by myself. In a word (for why should I conceal from my friend my sentiments whether right or wrong?) I look upon it as the first duty of every writer frequently to throw his eyes upon his title-page, and to consider well the subject he has proposed to himself; and he may be assured if he precisely pursues his plan, he cannot justly be thought tedious; whereas, on the contrary, if he suffers himself to wander from it, he will most certainly incur that censure.—Homer, you know, has employed many verses in the description of the arms of Achilles, as Virgil also has in those of Æneas; yet neither of them is prolix, because they each keep within the limits of their original design. Aratus, you see, is not deemed too circumstantial, though he traces and enumerates the minutest stars: for he does not go out of his way for that purpose, he only follows where his subject leads him. In the same manner (to compare small things with great), if endeavouring to give you an idea of my house, I have not deviated into any article foreign to the purpose, it is not my letter which describes, but my villa which is described, that is to be considered as large. But not to dwell any longer upon this digression, lest I should myself be condemned by the maxim I have just laid down; I have now informed you why I prefer my Tuscan villa to those which I possess at Tusculum*, Tiber†, and Præneste‡. Besides the advantages already mentioned, I here enjoy a more profound retirement,

* Now called Frascati, † Trivoli, and ‡ Palestrina, all of them situated in the *Campagna di Roma*, and at no great distance from Rome.

as I am at a farther distance from the business of the town, and the interruption of troublesome avocations. All is calm and composed; circumstances which contribute, no less than its clear air and unclouded sky, to that health of body and cheerfulness of mind which I particularly enjoy in this place; both which I preserve by the exercise of study and hunting. Indeed, there is no place which agrees better with all my family in general; I am sure, at least, I have not yet lost one (and I speak it with the sentiments I ought) of all those I brought with me hither: and may the gods continue that happiness to *me*, and that honour to my *villa*! Farewel.

LETTER XXXV.

TO CAPITO.

YOU are not singular in the advice you give me to undertake the writing of history: it is a work that has been frequently pressed upon me by several others of my friends, and in which I have some thoughts of engaging. Not because I have any confidence of succeeding in this way (it would be presuming upon the event of an experiment which I have never yet made), but because it is a noble employment to rescue from oblivion those who deserve to be eternally remembered; and, by extending the reputation of others, to advance at the same time our own. Nothing, I confess, so strongly stimulates my breast as the desire of acquiring a lasting name: a passion highly worthy of the human heart, especially of his, who, not being

conscious of any ill, is not afraid of being known to posterity. It is the continual subject, therefore, of my thoughts,

By what fair deed I too a name may raise* :
for to that I moderate my wishes ; the rest,
And gather round the world immortal praise,
is much beyond my hopes :

Though yet†—However the former is sufficient: and the writing of history is, perhaps, the only means I may promise myself to acquire it. Oratory and poetry, unless carried to the highest perfection, are talents of small recommendation ; but history, in whatever manner executed, is always entertaining. Mankind are naturally inquisitive, and so fond of having this turn gratified, that they will listen with attention to the plainest matter of fact, and the most common tale. But, besides, I have an example in my own family that inclines me to engage in a work of this kind ; my uncle and adoptive father having acquired great reputation as a very accurate historian : and the philosophers, you know, recommend it to us to tread in the steps of our ancestors, when they have led the way for us in the right path. If you ask me, then, why do I not immediately enter upon the task ? My reason is this ; I have pleaded some very important causes, and (though I am not extremely sanguine in my hopes concerning them)

* Virgil, Georg. 1. sub. init.

† Part of a verse from the fifth Æneid, where Menestheus, one of the competitors in the naval games, who was in some danger of being distanced, exhorts his men to exert their utmost vigour to prevent such a disgrace.

I have determined to revise my speeches, lest, for want of this remaining labour, all the pains they cost me should be thrown away, and they, with their author, be buried in oblivion: for, with respect to posterity, the work that was never finished, might as well have never been begun. You will think, perhaps, I might correct my pleadings, and write a history at the same time: I wish, indeed, I were capable of executing that double labour; but they are each such important undertakings, that either of them separate is abundantly sufficient for my powers. I was but nineteen when I first appeared at the bar; and yet it is only now at last I understand (and that, in truth, but imperfectly) what is essential to constitute a complete orator. How then shall I be able to support the joint-weight of an additional burthen? It is true, history and oratory have in many points a general resemblance; yet, in those very articles in which they seem to agree, there are several circumstances wherein they differ. Narration is common to them both; but narration of a distinct kind. The former contents itself frequently with common and familiar facts; the latter requires splendid, elevated, and extraordinary events: strength and sinews are sufficient in *that*, but beauty and ornament are essential to *this*: the excellency of the *one*, consists in a strong, grave, and close style; of the *other*, in a diffusive, flowing, and harmonious diction: in short, the words, the emphasis, and whole turn and structure of the respective periods are extremely different in these two arts. For, as Thucydides observes, there is a wide distance between compositions which are calculated for a *present purpose*, and those which are designed

to remain as *lasting monuments* to posterity ; by the first of which expressions he alludes to oratory, and by the other to history. For these reasons I am not inclined to blend together two performances of such distinct natures, which, as they are each of the highest rank, necessarily, therefore, require an undivided attention ; lest, confounded by a crowd of incongruous ideas, I should introduce into the one what is only suitable to the other. Therefore (to speak in the language of our bar), I must beg leave that the cause may be adjourned. In the mean while, I refer it to your consideration from what period I shall commence my history. Shall I take it up from those remote ages which have been treated of already by others ? In this way, indeed, the materials will be ready prepared to my hands, but the collating of the several historians will be a work of great labour : or, shall I treat only of the present times, and in which no other author has gone before me ? If so, I may probably give offence to many, and please but few. For, in an age so over-run with vice, you will find infinitely more to condemn than approve ; yet your praise, though ever so lavish, will be deemed too reserved ; and your censure, though ever so cautious, too severe.— However, this does not at all discourage me ; for I want not resolution to bear testimony to truth. I expect then, that you prepare the way which you have pointed out to me, and determine what subject I shall fix upon for my history ; that when I shall be ready to enter upon the task you have assigned me, I may not be delayed by some new difficulty. Farewel.

LETTER XXXVI.

TO SATURNINUS.

YOUR letter made very different impressions upon me, as it brought news which I both rejoiced and grieved to receive. It gave me pleasure when it informed me you were detained in Rome; and though you will tell me that circumstance affords you none, yet I cannot but rejoice at it, since you assure me you remain there upon my account, and defer the recital of your work till my return: for which I am greatly obliged to you. But I was much concerned at that article of your letter, which mentioned the dangerous illness of Julius Valens; though, indeed, with respect to himself, it ought to affect me with other sentiments, as it cannot but be for his advantage, the sooner he is relieved by death from a distemper of which there is no hope he can ever be cured. But what you add concerning Avitus, who died in his return from the province where he had been quæstor, is an accident too justly demanding our sorrow. His dying on board a ship, at a distance from his brother, whom he tenderly loved, and from his mother and sisters, are circumstances which, though they cannot affect him now, yet undoubtedly embittered his last moments, and aggravate the affliction of those friends he has left behind. How severe is the reflection, that a youth of his well-formed disposition should become extinct in the prime of life, and snatched from those high honours to which his virtues, had they been permitted to

grow to their full maturity, would certainly have raised him! How did his bosom glow with the love of the fine arts! How many volumes has he perused! How many treatises has he transcribed!—but the fruits of his labours are now perished with himself, and for ever lost to posterity. Yet why indulge my sorrow?—a passion which, if not restrained, always magnifies the slightest circumstances, and finds additional causes to aggravate our grief. I will put an end, therefore, to my letter, that I may to the tears which yours has drawn from me. Farewel.

LETTER XXXVII.

TO MARCELLINUS.

I WRITE to you, impressed with the deepest sorrow: the youngest daughter of my intimate friend Fundanus is dead? Never, surely, was there a more agreeable and more amiable young person, or one who better deserved to have enjoyed a long, I had almost said an immortal life! She was scarcely fourteen, and yet united the wisdom of age and discretion of a matron, with the sprightliness of youth, and sweetness of virgin modesty. With what an endearing fondness did she hang on her father's neck! How kindly and respectfully behave to us his friends! How affectionately treat all those who, in their respective offices, had the care of her education! She employed much of her time in study and reading; indulged herself in few diversions, and entered even into those with

singular caution and reserve. With what forbearance, with what patience, with what fortitude did she endure the last illness? She complied with all the directions of her physicians; encouraged the hopes of her sister and her father; and when her strength was totally exhausted, supported her spirits by the sole force of her own mind. The vigour of her mind, indeed, continued even to her last moments, unbroken by the pain of a long illness, or the terrors of approaching death: a reflection which renders the loss of her so much the more sensibly to be lamented by us. A loss infinitely, severe! and aggravated by the particular conjuncture in which it happened! She was contracted to a most worthy youth; the wedding day was fixed, and we were all invited. How sad a change, from the highest joy to the deepest sorrow! How shall I express the wound that pierced my heart, when I heard Fundanus himself (as grief is ever fond of dwelling upon every circumstance to increase the affliction) ordering the money he had designed to lay out upon clothes and jewels for her marriage, to be employed in myrrh and spices for her funeral! He is a man of great good sense and accomplishments, having applied himself, from his earliest youth, to the noblest arts and sciences: but all the maxims of fortitude and philosophy, which he has derived from books, or delivered by his own precepts, he now absolutely rejects; and every firmer virtue of his heart gives place to paternal tenderness. You will excuse, you will even approve his grief, when you consider what a loss he has sustained! He has lost a daughter who resembled him in his manners,

as well as his person, and exactly copied out all her father. If you should think proper to write to him upon the subject of a calamity so justly to be deplored, let me remind you not to urge the severer arguments of consolation, which seem to carry a sort of reproof with them but to use those only of a gentle and sympathizing humanity. Time will render him more open to the dictates of reason : for, as a recent wound shrinks from the hand of the surgeon, but gradually submits to, and even requires the means of cure ; so a mind, under the first impression of a misfortune, shuns and rejects all the persuasions of reason, but at length, if applied with tenderness, calmly and willingly resigns itself to consolation. Farewel.

LETTER XXXVIII.

TO SPURINNA.

KNOWING, as I do, how much you admire the polite arts, and what satisfaction you take in seeing young men of quality pursue the steps of their ancestors, I seize this earliest opportunity of informing you, that I went to-day to hear Calpurnius Piso read an elegant and spirited poem he has composed, entitled the *Sports of Love*. His numbers, which were elegiac, were tender, sweet, and flowing, at the same time that they occasionally rose into all the sublimity of diction which the nature of his subject required. He varied his style from the lofty to the simple, from the close to the copious, from the grave to the

florid, with equal genius and judgment. These beauties were much improved and recommended by a most harmonious voice, which a very becoming modesty rendered still more pleasing. A confusion and concern in the countenance of a speaker casts a grace upon all he utters: for, there is a certain decent timidity which, I know not how, is infinitely more engaging than the assured and self-sufficient air of confidence. I might mention several other circumstances to his advantage, and am the more inclined to point them out, as they are exceedingly striking in a person of his age, and are most uncommon in a youth of his quality: but not to enter into a farther detail of his merit, I will only add, that when he had finished his poem, I embraced him with the utmost complacency; and being persuaded that nothing is a greater encouragement than applause, I exhorted him to persevere in the path he had entered, and to shine out to posterity with the same glorious lustre which was reflected upon him from his ancestors. I congratulated his excellent mother, and particularly his brother, who gained as much honour by the generous affection he discovered upon this occasion, as Calpurnius did by his eloquence; so remarkable a solicitude he shewed for him when he began to recite his poem, and so much pleasure in his success. May the gods grant me frequently to have it in my power to send you accounts of this nature! for I have a partiality to the age in which I live, and should rejoice to find it not barren of merit. I ardently wish, therefore, our young men of quality would have something else to shew of honourable memorial in their

houses than the images* of their ancestors. As for those which are placed in the mansion of these excellent youths, I figure them to myself as silently applauding and encouraging their pursuits, and (what is a sufficient glory to both the brothers) as recognizing their kindred. Farewel.

LETTER XXXIX.

TO MACER.

ALL is well with me, since it is so with you. You are happy, I find, in the company of your wife and son; and are enjoying the pleasures of the sea, the freshness of the fountains, the verdure of the fields, and the elegancies of a most agreeable villa: for so I judge it to be, since *he*† who was perfectly happy ere fortune had raised him to what is generally esteemed the highest point of human felicity, chose it for the place of his retirement. As for myself, I am employed at my Tuscan villa in hunting and studying, sometimes alternately, and sometimes both together: but I am not yet able to determine in which of those pursuits it is most difficult to succeed. Farewel.

* None had the right of using family pictures or statues, but those whose ancestors or themselves had borne some of the highest dignities. So that the *jus imaginis* was much the same thing among the Romans, as the right of bearing a coat of arms among us.

† It is supposed by some commentators, that Pliny alludes here to Nerva, who, being suspected by Domitian, was ordered by that emperor to retire to Tarentum, where, without any views of reigning, he quietly sat down in the enjoyment of a private life.

LETTER XL.

TO PAULINUS.

As I know the humanity with which you treat your own servants, I do not scruple to confess to you the indulgence I shew to mine. I have ever in my mind Homer's character of Ulysses,

Who rul'd his people with a father's love :

And the very expression* in our language for the head of a family, suggests the rule of one's conduct towards it. But were I naturally of a rough and hardened cast of temper, the ill state of health of my freedman Zosimus (who has the stronger claim to a humane treatment at my hands, as he now stands much in need of it) would be sufficient to soften me. He is a person of great worth, diligent in his services, and well skilled in literature; but his chief talent, and, indeed, his distinguishing qualification, is that of a comedian, wherein he highly excels. He pronounces, with great judgment, propriety, and gracefulness: he has a very good hand too upon the lyre, and performs with more skill than is necessary for one of his profession. To this I must add, he reads history, oratory, and poetry, as well as if it had been the sole object of his study. I am the more particular in enumerating his qualifications, that you may see how many agreeable services I receive from him. He is, indeed, endeared to me by the

* The Latin word for a master of a family, implies a *father* of a family.

ties of a long affection, which is heightened by the danger he is now in. For nature has so formed our hearts, that nothing contributes more to enflame our passion for any enjoyment, than the apprehension of being deprived of it: a sentiment which Zosimus has given me occasion to experience more than once. Some years ago, he strained his lungs so much by too vehement an exertion of his voice, that he spit blood; upon which account I sent him into Egypt*; from whence, after a long absence, he lately returned with great benefit to his health. But having again exerted himself for several days together beyond his strength, he was reminded of his former malady, by a slight return of his cough, and a spitting of blood. For this reason, I intend to send him to your farm at Forum-Julii†, having frequently heard you mention it as an exceeding fine air, and recommend the milk of that place as very salutary in disorders of this nature. I beg you would give directions to your people to receive him into your house, and to supply him with what he shall have occasion for: which will not be much; for he is so temperate as not only to abstain from delicacies, but even to deny himself the necessaries his ill state of health requires. I shall furnish him towards his journey with whatever will be sufficient for one of his abstemious turn, who is coming under your roof. Farewel.

* The Roman physicians used to send their patients in consumptive cases into Egypt, particularly to Alexandria.

† Frejus in Provence, the southern part of France.

LETTER XLI.

TO CALPHURNIA*.

NEVER was business more uneasy to me, than when it prevented me not only from attending, but following you into Campania†. As at all times, so particularly now, I wish to be with you, that I may be a witness what progress you make in the recovery of your strength, and how the tranquillity, the amusements, and plenty of that charming country agrees with you. Were you in perfect health, yet I could ill support your absence; for, even a moment's uncertainty of the welfare of those we tenderly love, is a situation of mind infinitely painful: but, at present, your sickness conspires with your absence to alarm me with a thousand disquietudes. I fear every thing that can befall you, and, as is usual with all under the same anxious apprehensions, suspect most what I most dread. Let me conjure you then to prevent my solicitude, by writing to me every day, and even twice a day: I shall be more easy, at least while I am reading your letters; though all my fears will again return the moment I have perused them. Farewel.

* His wife.

† Where Fabatus, Calphurnia's grand-father, had a villa. This delightful country is celebrated by almost every classic author, and every modern traveller, for the fertility of its soil, the beauty of its landscape, and temperature of its air.

LETTER XLII.

TO CALPHURNIA.

You kindly tell me, my absence very sensibly affects you, and that your only consolation is in conversing with my works, which you frequently substitute in my place by your side. How agreeable is it to me to know that you thus wish for my company! and support yourself under the want of it by these tender amusements! In return, I entertain myself with reading over your letters again and again, and am continually taking them up, as if I had but just then received them; but alas! they only serve to make me more feelingly regret your absence; for how amiable must *her* conversation be, whose letters have so many charms! Let me receive them, however, as often as possible, notwithstanding there is always some mixture of pain in the pleasure they afford me, as they render me the more sensible of the loss I suffer by my absence. Farewel.

LETTER XLIII.

TO ALBINUS.

I WAS lately at Alsium*, where my wife's mother has a villa which once belonged to Verginius Rufus. The place renewed in my mind the sorrowful remembrance of that great and excellent man. He

* Now Alzia, not far from Como.

was extremely fond of this retirement, and used to call it *the nest of his old age*. Wherever I turned my eyes, I missed my worthy friend. I felt an inclination to see his monument, but I repented of my curiosity; for I had the mortification to find it remained still unfinished, not from any difficulty of the work itself, which is very plain, or rather, indeed, mean; but through the neglect of him to whose care the erection was entrusted. I could not see, without a concern mixed with indignation, the remains of a man whose fame filled the whole world, lie for ten years after his death without an inscription or a name. He had, however, directed *that* divine and immortal achievement of his life to be recorded upon his tomb in the following lines:

Here Rufus lies, who Vindex' arms withstood,
Not for himself, but for his country's good.

But a faithful friend is so rarely to be found, and the dead are so soon forgotten, that we shall be under the necessity of erecting our own sepulchres, and anticipate the office of our heirs. For who has not reason to fear that what has happened to Verginius, may be his own case? an indignity which is of so much the more public notoriety as it falls upon a man of his illustrious virtues.

LETTER XLIV.

TO MAXIMUS.

How happy a day did I lately pass! when having been led by the præfect* of Rome to his assistance in a certain cause, I had the pleasure to hear two excellent young men, Fuscus Salinator and Numidius Quadratus, plead on the opposite sides; both of them of extraordinary hopes and great talents, who will one day, I am persuaded, prove an ornament not only to the present age, but to literature itself. They discovered upon this occasion an admirable probity, supported by inflexible courage: their habit was decent, their elocution distinct, their voice manly, their memory strong†; their genius elevated, and guided

* An officer something in the nature of the lord mayor among us. He preceded all other city magistrates, having power to receive appeals from the inferior courts, and to decide almost all causes within the limits of Rome, or a hundred miles round.

† Strength of memory seems to have been a quality highly esteemed among the Romans, Pliny often mentioning it when he draws the characters of his friends, as in the number of their most shining talents. And Quintilian considers it as the measure of genius; *tantum ingenii*, says he, *quantum memoriæ*. The extraordinary perfection in which some of the ancients are said to have possessed this useful faculty is almost incredible. Our author speaks, in a former letter, of a Greek philosopher of his acquaintance, who, after having delivered a long harangue extempore, would immediately repeat it again, without losing a single word. Seneca says, he could in his youth repeat two thousand names exactly in the same order they were read to him: and that to try the strength of his memory, the audience who attended the same professor with himself, would each of

by an equal solidity of judgment. I took infinite pleasure in observing them display these noble qualities ; particularly as I had the satisfaction to see, that while they looked upon me as their guide and model, they appeared in the sentiments of the audience as my imitators and rivals. It was a day (I cannot but repeat it again) which afforded me the most exquisite happiness, and which I shall ever distinguish with the fairest mark *. For what indeed could be either more pleasing to me on the public account, than to observe two such noble youths building their fame and glory upon the polite arts, or more desirable upon my own, than to be marked out as a worthy example to them in their pursuits of virtue ? May heaven still grant me the continuance of that pleasure ! And you will bear me witness, I sincerely implore the gods

them give him a verse, which he would instantly repeat, beginning with the last line, and so on till the first, to the amount of two hundred. He tells a pleasant story upon this occasion of a certain poet, who having recited a poem in public, a person who was present claimed it for his own, and in proof of its being so, repeated it word for word ; which the real author was not capable of doing. Numberless instances might be collected from the ancients to the same purpose ; to mention only a few more : It is said of Themistocles, that he made himself master of the Persian language in a year's time ; of Mithridates, that he understood as many languages as he commanded nations, that is, no less than twenty-two ; of Cyrus, that he retained the name of every single soldier in his army. But the finest compliment that ever was paid to a good memory, is what Tully says of Julius Caesar in his oration for Ligarius, that " he never forgot any thing but an injury."

* Alluding to a custom of the Romans who marked the fortunate days in their calendar with white, and the unfortunate with black.

that every man who thinks me deserving of his imitation, may far exceed the model he has chosen. Farewell.

LETTER XLV.

TO MAURICUS.

IN compliance with your solicitation, I consent to make you a visit at your Formian villa, but it is upon condition that you put yourself to no inconvenience upon my account; a condition which I shall also strictly observe on my part. It is not the pleasures of your sea and your coast that I pursue: it is your company, together with ease and freedom from business, that I desire to enjoy; otherwise I might as well remain in Rome: for there is no medium worth accepting between giving up your time wholly to the disposal of others, or reserving it entirely in your own; at least for myself I declare I cannot relish mixtures of any kind. Farewel.

LETTER XLVI:

TO ROMANUS.

I BELIEVE you were not present at a very droll accident which lately happened: I was not indeed a witness to it myself; however, I had an early account of it. Passienus Paulus, an eminent Ro-

man knight, and particularly conspicuous for his great learning, has a turn for elegiac poetry; a talent which runs in the family, for Propertius was his relation as well as his countryman. He was lately reciting a poem which began thus:

Priscus, at thy command—

Whereupon Priscus, who happened to be present as a particular friend of the poet's, cried out, "But he is mistaken, I did not command him." Think what a peal of laughter this occasioned. The intellects of Priscus, you must know, are something suspicious; however, as he enters into the common offices of life, is called to consultations, and publicly acts as a lawyer, this behaviour was the more remarkable and ridiculous: and, in truth, Paulus was a good deal disconcerted by his friend's absurdity. Thus, you see, it is not only necessary that an author who recites his works in public, should himself have a sound judgment, but that he takes care his audience have so too. Farewel.

LETTER XLVII.

TO TACITUS.

YOUR request that I would send you an account of my uncle's death, in order to transmit a more exact relation of it to posterity, merits my acknowledgments; for, if the glorious circumstances which occasioned this accident shall be celebrated by your pen, the manner of his exit will be rendered for ever illustrious. Notwithstanding he perished

by a misfortune, which, as it involved at the same time a most beautiful country in ruins and destroyed so many populous cities, seems to promise him an everlasting remembrance; notwithstanding, he has himself composed many works which will descend to the latest times; yet, I am persuaded, the mentioning of him in your immortal writings, will greatly contribute to eternize his name.—Happy I deem those to be, whom the gods have distinguished with the abilities either of performing such actions as are worthy of being related, or of relating them in a manner worthy of being read; but doubly happy are they who are blessed with both these uncommon endowments: and in that number my uncle, as his own writings and your history will prove, may justly be ranked. It is with extreme willingness, therefore, I execute your commands; and I should, indeed, have claimed the task if you had not enjoined it. He was at that time with the fleet under his command at Misenum*. On the 24th of August, about one in the afternoon, my mother desired him to observe a cloud which appeared of a very unusual size and shape. He had just returned from enjoying the benefit of the sun, and after bathing in cold water, and taking a slight repast, was retired to his study: he immediately arose, and went out upon an eminence, from whence he might more distinctly view this very singular phænomenon. It was not at that distance discernible from what mountain this cloud issued, but it was found afterwards to proceed from Vesuvius. I cannot

* In the gulf of Naples.

give you a more exact description of its figure, than by resembling it to that of a pine-tree; for it shot up a great height in the form of a tall trunk, which spread at the top into a sort of branches; occasioned, I suppose, either that the force of the internal vapour which impelled the cloud upwards, decreased in strength as it advanced, or that the cloud, being pressed back by its own weight, expanded itself in the manner I have mentioned: it appeared sometimes bright, and sometimes dark and spotted, as it was either more or less impregnated with earth and cinders. This uncommon appearance excited my uncle's philosophical curiosity to take a nearer view of it. He accordingly ordered a light vessel to be prepared, and offered me the liberty, if I thought proper, to attend him. I rather chose to continue the employment in which I was engaged; for it happened, that he had given me a certain writing to copy. As he was going out of the house with his tablets in his hand, he was met by the mariners belonging to the gallies stationed at Retina, from which they had fled in the utmost terror; for that port being situated at the foot of Vesuvius, they had no other way to escape than by sea. They conjured him, therefore, not to proceed and expose his life to imminent and inevitable danger. In compliance with their advice, he changed his original intention, and instead of gratifying his philosophical spirit, he resigned it to the more magnanimous principle of aiding the distressed. With this view, he ordered the fleet immediately to put to sea, and went himself on board with an intention of assisting not only Retina, but the several

other towns which stood thick upon that beautiful coast. Hastening to the place, therefore, from whence others fled with the utmost terror, he steered his direct course to the point of danger, and with so much calmness and presence of mind, as to be able to make and dictate his observations upon the appearance and progress of that dreadful scene. He was now so near the mountain, that the cinders, which grew thicker and hotter the more he advanced, fell into the ships, together with pumice-stones, and black pieces of burning rock ; they were, likewise, in danger not only of being a-ground by the sudden retreat of the sea, but also from the vast fragments which rolled down from the mountains, and obstructed all the shore. Here he stopped, to consider whether he should return back ; to which the pilot advising him, “ *Fortune,*” said he “ *befriends the brave ; steer to Pomponianus.*” Pomponianus was then at Stabiæ *, separated by a gulf, which the sea, after several insensible windings, forms upon that shore. Pomponianus had already sent his baggage on board ; for, though he was not at that time in actual danger, yet, being within the view of it, and, indeed, extremely near, he was determined, if it should in the least increase, to put to sea as soon as the wind should change. It was favourable, however, for carrying my uncle to Pomponianus, whom he found in the greatest consternation : and embracing him with tenderness, he encouraged and exhorted him to keep up his spirits. The more to dissipate his fears, he ordered his

* Now called *Castel e Mar di Stabia*, in the gulf of Naples.

servants, with an air of unconcern, to carry him to the baths ; and, after having bathed, he sat down to supper with great, or at least (what is equally heroic) with all the appearance of cheerfulness. In the mean while, the fire from Vesuvius flamed forth from several parts of the mountain with great violence ; which the darkness of the night contributed to render still more visible and dreadful. But my uncle, in order to calm the apprehensions of his friend, assured him it was only the conflagration of the villages, which the country people had abandoned : after this, he retired to rest, and it is most certain, he was so little discomposed as to fall into a deep sleep ; for, being corpulent, and breathing hard, the attendants in the antichamber actually heard him snore. The court which led to his apartment being now almost filled with stones and ashes, it would have been impossible for him, if he had continued there any longer, to have made his way out ; it was thought proper, therefore, to awaken him. He got up, and joined Pomponianus and the rest of the company, who had not been sufficiently unconcerned to think of going to bed. They consulted together whether it would be most prudent to trust to the houses, which now shook from side to side with frequent and violent concussions ; or flee to the open fields, where the calcined stones and cinders, though levigated indeed, yet fell in large showers, and threatened them with instant destruction. In this distress, they resolved for the fields, as the less dangerous situation of the two ; a resolution which, while the rest of the company were hurried into by their

fears, my uncle embraced upon cool and deliberate consideration. They went out then, having pillows tied upon their heads with napkins; and this was their whole defence against the storm of stones that fell around them. It was now day every where else, but *there* a deeper darkness prevailed than in the blackest night; which, however, was in some degree dissipated by torches and other lights of various kinds. They thought it expedient to go down farther upon the shore, in order to observe if they might safely put out to sea; but they found the waves still running extremely high and boisterous. There my uncle, having drunk a draught or two of cold water, laid himself down upon a sail-cloth which was spread for him; when immediately the flames, preceded by a strong smell of sulphur, dispersed the rest of the company, and obliged him to rise. He raised himself up, with the assistance of two of his servants, and instantly fell down dead; suffocated, I conjecture, by some gross and noxious vapour, as having always had weak lungs, and being frequently subject to a difficulty of breathing. As soon as it was light again, which was not till the third day after this melancholy accident, his body was found entire, and without any marks of violence, exactly in the same posture in which he fell, and looking more like a man asleep than dead. During all this time, my mother and I, who were at Misenum—But as this has no connexion with your history, so your inquiry went no farther than concerning my uncle's death: with that, therefore, I will put an end to my letter. Suffer me only to add, that I have faithfully related to you what I

was either an eye-witness of myself, or received immediately after the accident happened, and before there was time to vary the truth. You will choose out of this narrative such circumstances as shall be most suitable to your purpose; for there is a great difference between writing a letter, and composing a history; between addressing a friend, and addressing the public. Farewel.

LETTER XLVIII.

TO CORNELIUS TACITUS.

THE letter which in compliance with your request I wrote to you, concerning the death of my uncle, has raised, it seems, your curiosity to know what terrors and dangers attended me while I continued at Misenum; for there, I think, the account in my former broke off:

Tho' my shock'd soul recoils, my tongue shall tell.

My uncle having left us, I continued the employment which prevented my going with him, till it was time to bathe; after which I went to supper, and then fell into a short and unquiet sleep. There had been, during many days before, some shocks of an earthquake, which the less alarmed us as they are frequent in Campania; but they were so particularly violent that night, that they not only shook every thing about us, but seemed, indeed, to threaten total destruction. My mother flew to my chamber, where she found me rising in order to awaken her.

We went out into a small court belonging to the house, which separated the sea from the buildings. As I was at that time but eighteen years of age, I know not whether I should call my behaviour, in this perilous conjuncture, courage or rashness; but I took up Livy, and amused myself with turning over that author, and even making extracts from him, as if I had been perfectly at my ease. While we were in this situation, a friend of my uncle's, who was just come from Spain to pay him a visit, joined us, and observing me sitting by my mother with a book in my hand, reproved her patience, and my security: nevertheless, I still went on with my author. It was now morning, but the light was exceedingly faint and languid; the buildings all around us tottered, and though we stood upon open ground, yet, as the place was narrow and confined, there was no remaining without imminent danger: we therefore resolved to leave the town. The people followed us in the utmost consternation, and (as to a mind distracted with terror, every suggestion seems more prudent than its own) pressed in great crowds about us in our way out. Being advanced at a convenient distance from the houses, we stood still, in the midst of a most hazardous and tremendous scene. The chariots which we had ordered to be drawn out, were so agitated backwards and forwards, though upon the most level ground, that we could not keep them steady even by supporting them with large stones. The sea seemed to roll back upon itself, and to be driven from its banks by the convulsive motion of the earth; it is certain at least the shore was consi-

derably enlarged, and several sea-animals were left upon it. On the other side a black and dreadful cloud bursting with an igneous serpentine vapour, darted out a long train of fire, resembling flashes of lightning, but much larger. Upon this our Spanish friend, whom I mentioned above, addressing himself to my mother and me, with great warmth and earnestness: "*If your brother and your uncle,*" said he, "*is safe, he certainly wishes you may be so too; but if he perished, it was his desire, no doubt, that you might both survive him: why, therefore, do you delay your escape a moment?*" We could never think of our own safety, we replied, while we were uncertain of his: upon which our friend left us, and withdrew from the danger with the utmost precipitation. Soon afterwards, the cloud seemed to descend, and cover the whole ocean; as, indeed, it entirely hid the island of Caprea*, and the promontory of Misenum. My mother conjured me to make my escape at any rate, which, as I was young, I might easily effect; as for herself, she said, her age and corpulency rendered all attempts of that sort impossible: however, she would willingly meet death, if she could have the satisfaction of seeing that she was not the occasion of mine. But I absolutely refused to leave her, and taking her by the hand I led her on: she complied with great reluctance, and not without many reproaches to herself for being the occasion of retarding my flight. The ashes now began to fall upon us, though in no great quantity. I turned

* An island near Naples, now called Capri.

my head, and observed behind us a thick smoke, which came rolling after us like a torrent. I proposed, while we had yet any light, to turn out of the high road, lest she should be pressed to death in the dark, by the crowd that followed us. We had scarcely stepped out of the path, when darkness overspread us, not like that of a cloudy night, or when there is no moon, but of a room when it is shut up, and all the lights extinct. Nothing then was to be heard but the shrieks of women, the screams of children, and the cries of men: some calling for their children, others for their parents, others for their husbands, and only distinguishing each other by their voices; one lamenting his own fate, another that of his family; some wishing to die, from the very fear of dying; some lifting their hands to the gods; but the greater part imagining that the last and eternal night was come, which was to destroy both the gods* and the world together. Among these there were some who augmented the real terrors by imaginary ones, and made the frightened multitude falsely believe that Misenum was actually in flames. At length a glimmering light appeared, which we imagined to be rather the forerunner of an approaching burst of flames (as in fact it was), than the return of day; however, the fire fell at a distance from us: then again we were immersed in thick darkness, and a heavy shower of ashes rained upon us, which we

* The Stoic and Epicurean philosophers held, that the world was to be destroyed by fire, and all things fall again into original chaos; not excepting even the national gods themselves from the destruction of this general conflagration.

were obliged every now and then to shake off, otherwise we should have been overwhelmed and buried in the heap. I might boast, that during all this scene of horror, not a sigh, or expression of fear, escaped from me, had not my support been founded on that miserable, though strong consolation, that all mankind were involved in the same calamity, and that I imagined I was perishing with the world itself. At last, this terrible darkness was dissipated by degrees, like a cloud or smoke; the real day returned, and even the sun appeared, though very faintly, and as when an eclipse is coming on. Every object that presented itself to our eyes (which were extremely weakened) seemed changed, being covered with white ashes*, as with a deep snow. We returned to Misenum, where we refreshed ourselves as well as we could, and passed an anxious night between hope and fear; though, indeed, with a much larger share of the latter: for the earth still continued to shake, while several enthusiastic persons ran wildly among the people, throwing out terrifying predictions, and making a kind of frantic sport of their own and their friends' wretched situation. However, my mother and I, notwithstanding the danger we had passed, and that which still threatened us, had no intention of leaving Misenum, till we should receive some account of my uncle.—

And now, you will read this narrative without

* Mr. Addison, in his account of Mount Vesuvio, observes, that the air of the place is so very much impregnated with saltpetre, that one can scarce find a stone which has not the top white with it. Travels, 152.

any view of inserting it in your history, of which it is by no means worthy: and, indeed, you must impute it to your own request, if it should appear not to deserve even the trouble of a letter. Farewel.

LETTER XLIX.

TO TRIARIUS.

I CONSENT to undertake the cause which you so earnestly recommend to me; but glorious and honourable as it may be, I will not be your counsel without a fee. Is it possible, you will say, that my friend Pliny should be so mercenary? It is, and I insist upon a reward which will do me more honour than the most disinterested patronage. I request you then, and, indeed, I make it a previous condition, that Cremutius Ruso may be joined with me as counsel in this cause. This is a practice which I have frequently observed with respect to several distinguished youths; as I take infinite pleasure in presenting young men of merit to the bar, and introducing them to the notice of Fame. But if ever I owed this good office to any man, it is certainly to Ruso, not only upon account of his family, but his warm affection to me: and it would afford me a very singular satisfaction to have an opportunity of seeing him draw the attention of the audience in the same court, and the same cause with myself. This I now ask as an obligation to me; but, when he has pleaded in your cause, you will esteem it as a favour done to you: for I will

be answerable that he shall acquit himself in a manner equal to your wishes, as well as to my hopes, and the importance of the trial. He is a youth of a most excellent disposition : and when once I shall have produced his merit to public observation, we shall soon see him exert the same generous office in bringing forward the talents of others; as, indeed, no man, without the support and encouragement of friends, and having proper opportunities thrown in his way, is able to rise at once from obscurity, by the force of his own unassisted genius.

LETTER L.

TO SERVIANUS.

I AM extremely rejoiced to hear that you design your daughter for Fuscus Salinator, and congratulate you upon it. His family is Patrician*, and both his father and mother are persons of the most exalted merit. As for himself, he is studious, learned, and eloquent, and with all the innocence of a child, unites the sprightliness of youth to the wisdom of age. I am not, believe me, deceived by my affection, when I give him this character ; for though I love him beyond measure (as his kind offices and regard to me well deserve), yet partiality has no share in my judgment ; on the contrary, the stronger my affection for him is, the

* Those families were styled patrician, whose ancestors had been members of the senate in the earliest times of the regal or consular government.

more rigorously I weigh his merit. I will venture then, to assure you (and I speak it upon my own experience) you could not have wished for a more accomplished son-in-law. May he soon present you with a grandson, who shall be the exact copy of his father ! and with what pleasure shall I receive from the arms of two such friends, their children or grand-children, whom I shall claim a sort of right to embrace as my own ! Farewel.

LETTER LI.

TO RESTITUTUS.

THIS obstinate distemper which hangs upon you greatly alarms me ; and though I know how extremely temperate you are, yet I am afraid your disease should get the better of your moderation. Let me entreat you then, to resist it with a determined abstemiousness : a remedy, be assured, of all others the most laudable, as well as the most salutary. There is nothing impracticable in what I recommend ; it is a rule, at least, which I always enjoin my family to observe with respect to myself. I tell them, should I be attacked with any disorder, I hope that I shall desire nothing of which I ought either to be ashamed, or have reason to repent ! however, if my distemper should prevail over my judgment, I forbid them to give me any thing but by the consent of my physicians ; and I assure the people about me, that I shall resent their compliance with me in things improper, as much as another man would their refusal. I had once a

most violent fever ; when the fit was a little abated and I had been anointed*, my physician offered me something to drink : I desired he would first feel my pulse, and upon his seeming to think the paroxysm was not quite abated, I instantly returned the cup, though it was just at my lips. Afterwards, when I was preparing to go into the bath, twenty days from the first attack of my illness, perceiving the physicians whispering together, I enquired what they were saying. They replied, they were of opinion I might possibly bathe with safety : nevertheless, they were not without some suspicion of hazard. What occasion then is there, said I, of bathing at all ? And thus with great complacency, I gave up a pleasure I was upon the point of enjoying, and abstained from the bath with the same satisfaction I was preparing to enter it. I mention this, not only in order to enforce my advice by example, but also that this letter may be a sort of tie upon me to observe the same resolute abstinence for the future. Farewel.

LETTER LII.

TO CALPHURNIA†.

IT is incredible how impatiently I wish for your return ; such is the tenderness of my affection for you, and so unaccustomed am I to a separation ! I lie awake the greatest part of the night in think-

* Uction was much esteemed as a remedy in certain cases by the ancient physicians. Celsus, who flourished, it is supposed, about Pliny's time, expressly recommends it in the remission of acute distempers.

† His wife.

ing of you, and (to use a very common, but very true expression) my feet carry me of their own accord to your apartment, at those hours I used to visit you ; but not finding you there, I return with as much sorrow and disappointment as an excluded lover. The only intermission my anxiety knows, is when I am engaged at the bar, and in the causes of my friends. Judge then how wretched must his life be, who finds no repose but in business ; no consolation but in a crowd. Farewel.

LETTER LIII.

TO TUSCUS.

YOU desire my sentiments concerning the method of study you should pursue, in that retirement to which you have long since withdrawn. In the first place then, I look upon it as a very advantageous practice (and it is what many recommend) to translate either from Greek into Latin, or from Latin into Greek. By this means you will furnish yourself not only with proper but brilliant expressions, with a variety of beautiful figures ; and, in short, acquire a nervous and powerful style. Besides, by imitating the most approved authors, you will find your imagination insensibly catch their flame, and kindle into a similar warmth of invention ; at the same time that those passages which you may have possibly overlooked in a common way of reading, cannot escape you in translating : and this method will also enlarge your knowledge, and improve your judgment. After you have read

an eminent author, it may be proper, in order to make yourself more perfectly master of his subject and argument, to turn, from being his reader, to be his rival, as it were, and attempt something of your own upon the same topic; and then make an impartial comparison between your performance and his, in order to observe in what points either you or he have most happily succeeded. It will be a matter of very pleasing congratulation to yourself, if you should find, in some articles, that you have the advantage of him, as it will be a great mortification if he should rise above you in all. You may sometimes venture, in these little experimental essays, to try your strength upon the most shining passages of a distinguished author. The attempt, indeed, will be somewhat bold; but as it is a contention which passes in secret it cannot be taxed with presumption. Not but that we have seen instances of persons, who have publicly entered this sort of lists with great success, and while they did not despair of overtaking, have gloriously advanced before those whom they would have thought it sufficient honour to follow. After you have thus finished a composition, you may lay it aside, till it is no longer fresh in your memory, and then take it up, in order to revise and correct it. You will find several things to retain, but still more to reject; you will add a new thought here, and alter another there. It is a laborious and tedious task, I own, thus to re-inflame the mind after its first ardour has subsided; to recover an impulse when its force has been checked and spent: in a word, to interweave new parts into the texture of a composition, without disturbing or confound-

ing the original plan ; but the advantage attending this method will overbalance the difficulty. I know your present attention is principally directed towards the eloquence of the bar ; but I would not for that reason advise you never to quit the polemic, if I may so call it, and contentious style. As land is improved by sowing it with various seeds, so is the mind by exercising it with different studies. I would recommend it to you, therefore, sometimes to single out a fine passage of history ; and sometimes to exercise yourself in the epistolary style. For it frequently happens, that, in pleading, one has occasion to introduce historical, and even poetical descriptions ; as, by studying the epistolary manner of writing, you will acquire a concise and easy expression. It will be extremely advantageous also to unbend your mind by poetical compositions : when I say so, I do not mean that species of poetry which turns upon subjects of great length (*such* being suitable only for persons of much leisure), but those little pieces of the sprightly kind of poesy, which serve as proper reliefs to, and are consistent with employments of every sort. They commonly go under the title of *poetical amusements* ; but these amusements have sometimes gained as much reputation to their authors as works of a more serious nature.

In this manner the greatest men, as well as the most eminent orators, were accustomed either to exercise or amuse themselves, or rather indeed both. It is surprising how much the mind is entertained and refreshed by these little poetical compositions, as they turn upon subjects of gallantry, satire, tenderness, manners, and every thing, in

short, that concerns life and the affairs of the world. — Besides, the same advantage attends the exercising our minds in this inferior species of poesy, as in every other sort; we turn from them to the easier composition of prose with so much the more pleasure, after having experienced the difficulty of being constrained and fettered by numbers.

And now, perhaps, I have enlarged upon the question you proposed to me more than you desired; nevertheless, there is still one article which I have omitted: I have not told you what kind of authors you should read: though indeed that was sufficiently implied when I mentioned the subjects I would recommend for your compositions. You will remember that the most approved writers of each sort are to be carefully selected; for, as it has been well observed, “though we should read much, we should not read many books*.” Who those

* Thus the noble and polite moralist, speaking of the influence which our reading has upon our taste and manners, thinks it improper “to call a man well-read, who reads many authors; since he must, of necessity, have more ill models than good: and be more stuffed with bombast, ill fancy, and wry thought, than filled with solid sense and just imagination.” When the Goths overran Greece, the libraries escaped their destruction; by a notion which some of their leaders industriously propagated among them, that it would be more for their interest to leave those spoils untouched to their enemies; as being proper to enervate their minds, and amuse them with vain and idle speculations. Truth, perhaps, has been less a gainer by this multiplicity of books than error; and it may be a question, whether the excellent models which have been delivered down to us from antiquity, together with those few which modern times have produced, by any means balance the immoderate weight which must be thrown into the opposite scale of writers. The truth is, though we may be learned by other men’s

authors are, is so clearly settled, and so generally known, that I need not particularly name them; besides, I have already extended this letter to such an immoderate length, that I fear I have too long interrupted those studies, the method of which I have been pointing out to you. I will here resign you, therefore, to your tablets, either to resume the studies in which you were before engaged, or to enter upon some of those I have recommended. Farewel.

LETTER LIV.

TO PRISCUS.

I AM deeply afflicted by the ill state of health of my friend Fannia, which she contracted during her attendance on Junia, one of the vestal virgins. She engaged in this good office at first voluntarily, Junia being her relation; but was afterwards appointed to it by an order from the college of priests; for these virgins, when any indisposition makes it necessary to remove them from the temple of Vesta, are always delivered into the care and custody of some venerable matron. It was her assiduity in the execution of this charge that occasioned her present disorder, which is a continual fever, attended with a cough that increases

reflections, wise we can only be by our own: and the maxim here recommended by Pliny. would well deserve the attention of the studious, though no other inconvenience attended the reading of many books, than that which sir William Temple apprehends from it: the lessening the force and growth of a man's own genius.

daily. She is extremely emaciated, and every part of her frame seems in a total decay, except her spirits; those, indeed, she preserves in their full vigour, and with a fortitude worthy the wife of Helvidius, and the daughter of Thræsea. In every other article her health is so greatly impaired, that I am more than apprehensive upon her account; I am deeply afflicted. I grieve, my friend, that so excellent a woman is going to be removed from the world, which will never, perhaps, again behold her equal. How eminent is her chastity, her piety, her gravity, her courage! She twice followed her husband into exile, and once was banished upon his account. For Senecio, when he was arraigned for writing the life of Helvidius, having said, in his defence, that he composed that work at the request of Fannia; Metius Carus, with a stern and threatening air, asked her whether it was true? She acknowledged it was; and when he farther questioned her, whether she supplied him likewise with materials for that purpose, and whether her mother was privy to this transaction? she boldly confessed the former, but absolutely denied the latter. In short, throughout her whole examination, not a word escaped her which betrayed the least timidity. On the contrary, she had the courage to preserve a copy of those very books which the senate, overawed by the tyranny of the times, had ordered to be suppressed, and the effects of the author to be confiscated; taking with her, as her companions, those obnoxious volumes which had been the cause of her exile.—How pleasing is her conversation! how polite her address! and (which seldom unites in the same character) how

venérable her whole demeanour ! She will hereafter, I am well persuaded, be pointed out as a model to all wives, and perhaps be deemed worthy to be held forth as an example of fortitude even to our sex. I am sure, at least, that we, who have the pleasure of seeing and conversing with her, contemplate her with the same admiration as those female heroines who are celebrated in ancient story. I confess I cannot but tremble for this illustrious house, as it seems shaken to its very foundation, and falling into ruins with this excellent woman ; for, though she will leave descendants behind her, yet what a height of virtue must they attain, what glorious actions must they perform, ere the world will be persuaded that she was not the last of her family ! It is an aggravating circumstance of affliction to me, that, by her death, I seem to lose a second time her mother ; that worthy mother (and what can I say higher in her praise ?) of so amiable a woman ! who, as she was restored to me in her daughter, so she will now again be taken from me, and the loss of Fannia will thus pierce my heart at once with a fresh stab, and tear open a former wound. I so truly loved and honoured them both, that I know not which had the greatest share of my affection and esteem ; and it was a question they wished might ever remain undetermined. In their prosperity and their adversity I performed every good office to them in my power, and was their comforter in exile, as well as their avenger at their return. But I have not yet discharged all the obligations I owe them, and am so much the more solicitous for the recovery of this lady, that I may have time to acquit

the full claim she has upon my kindest offices. Such is the anxiety under which I write this letter ! But if some friendly power should happily give me occasion to exchange it for sentiments of joy, I shall not complain of the alarms I now suffer.

LETTER LV.

TO RUFUS.

WHAT numbers of learned men does modesty conceal, or love of retirement withdraw, from public fame ! and yet, when we are going to speak or recite in numerous assemblies, it is the judgment only of popular and ostentatious talents, of which we stand in awe ; whereas we have more reason to revere the decisions of those who cultivate the sciences in contemplative life, and form their opinions of works of genius, in privacy and silence, undistracted by the noise of clamorous assemblies : an observation which I give you upon experience. Terentius Junior, having passed through the military offices suitable to a person of equestrian rank, and executed with great integrity the post of receiver-general of the revenues in Narbonensian Gaul*, retired to his estate ; preferring the enjoyment of an uninterrupted tranquillity, to those honours which his services had merited.

* One of the four principal divisions of ancient Gaul: it extended from the Pyrenean mountains, which separate France from Spain, to the Alps, which divide it from Italy, and comprehend Languedoc, Provence, Dauphiny, and Savoy.

He invited me lately to his house, where, looking upon him only as a worthy master of a family and an industrious farmer, I started such rural topics of conversation, in which I imagined he was most versed. But he soon turned the discourse, and displaying a great fund of knowledge, entered upon subjects of literature. I was astonished at the elegance with which he expressed himself both in Latin and Greek: for he is so perfectly well skilled in each, that whichever he speaks, seems to be the language wherein he particularly excels. How extensive is his reading! how tenacious his memory! You would not imagine him the inhabitant of an ignorant country village, but a citizen of the learned Athens. In short, his conversation has increased my solicitude concerning my works, and taught me to revere the judgment of these studious country gentlemen, as much as that of more known and distinguished literati. Let me persuade you to consider them in the same light: for believe me, upon a careful observation, you will often find in the literary, as well as military world, most powerful abilities concealed under a rustic garb. Farewel.

LETTER LVI.

TO MAXIMUS.

THE lingering disorder of a friend of mine gave me occasion lately to reflect, that we are always in the best moral disposition when afflicted with sickness. Where is the man, who, labouring under

the pain of any distemper, is either solicited by avarice, or enflamed with lust? At such a season he is neither the slave of love, nor the fool of ambition: he looks with indifference upon the charms of wealth, and is contented with ever so small a portion of it, as being upon the point of leaving even that little. It is *then* he recollects there are Gods, and that he himself is but a man: no mortal is *then* the object of his envy, his admiration, or his contempt; and having no malice to gratify, the tales of slander excite not his attention: his dreams run only upon the refreshment of baths and fountains. These are the supreme objects of his thoughts and wishes, while he resolves, if he should recover, to pass the remainder of his days disengaged from the cares and business of the world; that is, in innocence and happiness. I may, therefore, lay down to you and myself a short rule, which the philosophers have endeavoured to inculcate at the expence of many words, and even many volumes; that "we should realize in health, those resolutions we form in sickness." Farewel.

LETTER LVII.

TO GEMINIUS.

OUR friend Macrinus has received a most severe wound: he has lost his wife! a lady whose exemplary virtues would have rendered her an ornament even to former times. He lived with her thirty-nine years in the most uninterrupted harmony. How respectful was her behaviour to him!

and how well did she herself deserve the highest respect ! In her character were united all those amiable virtues that adorn and distinguish the different periods of female life ! It should surely afford great consolation to Macrinus, that he has thus long enjoyed so exquisite a blessing. But that reflection seems only so much the more to embitter his loss : as indeed the pain of parting with our happiness still rises in proportion to the length of its continuance. I cannot therefore but be greatly anxious for so valuable a friend, till this deep wound to his peace shall be in a state to admit of proper applications. Time, however, together with a satiety of grief itself, will best and indeed necessarily effect his cure. . Farewel.

LETTER LVIII.

TO ROMANUS.

HAVE you ever seen the source of the river Clitumnus* ? as I never heard you mention it, I imagine not ; let me therefore advise you to visit it immediately. It is but lately indeed I had that pleasure, and I condemn myself for not having viewed it sooner. At the foot of a little hill, covered with venerable and shady cypress trees, a spring issues,

* Now called Clitumno : it rises a little below the village of Campello in Umbria. The inhabitants near this river still retain a notion, that its waters are attended with a supernatural property, imagining it makes the cattle white that drink of it : a quality for which it is likewise celebrated by many of the Latin poets.

which, gushing out in different and unequal streams, forms itself, after several windings, into a spacious bason, so extremely clear, that you may see the pebbles, and the little pieces of money which are thrown into it *, as they lie at the bottom. From thence it is carried off not so much by the declivity of the ground, as by its own weight and exuberance. It is navigable almost as soon as it has quitted its source, and wide enough to admit a free passage for vessels to pass each other, as they sail with or against the stream. The current runs so strong, though the ground is level, that the large barges which go down the river have no occasion to make use of their oars; while those which ascend, find it difficult to advance, even with the assistance of oars and poles: and this vicissitude of labour and ease is exceedingly amusing, when one sails up and down merely for pleasure. The banks on each side are shaded with great numbers of verdant ash and poplar trees, as distinctly reflected in the stream, as if they were actually existing in it. The water is cold as snow, and as lucid too. Near it stands an ancient and venerable temple, wherein is placed a statue representing the river-god Clitumnus in his proper vestment; and, indeed, the prophetic

* The heads of considerable rivers, hot springs, large bodies of standing water, &c. were esteemed holy among the Romans, and cultivated with religious ceremonies. It was customary to throw little pieces of money into those fountains, lakes, &c. which had the reputation of being sacred, as a mark of veneration for those places, and to render the presiding deities propitious. Suetonius mentions this practice, in the annual vows which he says the Roman people made for the health of Augustus.

oracles here delivered, sufficiently testify the immediate presence of that divinity. Several little chapels are scattered round, dedicated to particular gods, distinguished by different names, and some of them too presiding over different fountains. For, besides the principal spring, which is, as it were, the parent of all the rest, there are several smaller streams, which taking their rise from various sources, lose themselves in the river; over which a bridge is thrown, that separates the sacred part from that which lies open to common use. Vessels are allowed to come above this bridge, but no person is permitted to swim*, except below it. The Hispellates†, to whom Augustus gave this place, furnish a public bath, and likewise entertain all strangers, at their own expense. Several villas, attracted by the beauty of this river, are situated upon its borders. In short, every surrounding object will afford you entertainment. You may also amuse yourself with numberless inscriptions, fixed upon the pillars and walls by different persons, celebrating the virtues of the fountain, and the divinity who presides over it. There are many of them you will greatly admire, as there are some that will make you laugh; but I must correct myself when I say so; you are too humane, I know, to laugh upon such an occasion. Farewel.

* The touch of a naked body was thought to pollute those consecrated waters.

† Inhabitants of a town in Ombria, now called Spello.

LETTER LIX.

TO URSUS.

IT is long since I have taken either a book, or a pencil in my hand ; since I have known the sweets of leisure and repose ; since I have known, in short, that indolent, but agreeable satisfaction of doing nothing, and being nothing ; so much have the affairs of my friends engaged me, and prevented me from enjoying the pleasures of retirement and contemplation. There is no sort of philosophical studies, however, sufficiently important to supersede the offices of friendship ; for they are offices which philosophy herself teaches us most religiously to discharge. Farewel.

LETTER LX.

TO HISPULLA*.

WHEN I consider that you love your niece even more fondly than if she were your own daughter, I ought, in the first place, to inform you of her recovery, before I tell you she has been ill ; that the sentiments of joy at the one, may leave you no leisure to be afflicted at the other. Though I fear, indeed, after your first transports of gratulation are over, you will feel some concern ; and, in the midst of your joy for the danger she has escaped, will tremble at the thought of that which

* His wife's aunt.

she has undergone. She is now, however, in good spirits, and again restored to herself and to me; and is recovering her strength and health as fast as she lost them. To say the truth (and I may now safely tell it you), her life was in the utmost danger; not indeed from any fault of her own, but a little from the inexperience of her youth. To this must be imputed the cause of her miscarriage, and the sad experience she has had of the consequence of not knowing she was breeding. But though this misfortune has deprived you at present of a nephew, or a niece, to console you for the loss of your brother; you should reflect that it is a blessing which seems rather to be deferred than denied, since *her* life is preserved from whom that happiness is to be expected. I entreat you then to represent this accident to your father† in the most favourable light; as your sex are the best advocates in cases of this kind Farewel.

LETTER LXI.

TO GEMINITUS.

HAVE you never observed a sort of people, who, though they are themselves the abject slaves of every vice, shew a kind of malicious indignation against the immoral conduct of others; and are most severe to those whom they most resemble? yet, surely, a lenity of disposition, even in persons who have the least occasion for clemency them-

* Fabatus, grandfather to Calphurnia, Pliny's wife.

selves, is, of all virtues, the most becoming. The highest of characters, in my estimation, is his who is as ready to pardon the moral errors of mankind, as if he were every day guilty of some himself; and at the same time as cautious of committing a fault, as if he never forgave one. It is a rule, then, which we should upon all occasions, both private and public, most religiously observe, to be inexorable to our own failings, while we treat those of the rest of the world with tenderness, not excepting even those who forgive none but themselves; remembering always, what the humane, and, *therefore*, as well as upon other accounts, the great Thræsea, used frequently to say: *He who hates vice hates mankind**. You will ask me, perhaps, who it is that has given occasion to these reflections? You must know a certain person lately —— but of that when we meet—though, upon second thoughts, not even *then*, lest, whilst I condemn and expose *his* conduct, I should act counter to that maxim I particularly recommend. Whoever, therefore, and whatever he is, shall remain in silence; for, though there may be some use, perhaps, in setting a mark upon the man, for the sake of example; there will be more, however, in sparing him, for the sake of humanity. Farewel.

* The meaning of this maxim seems to be, that, as it is extremely difficult to separate the action from the man, we should not suffer the errors of the world to raise in us that acrimony of indignation, which, if well examined, perhaps, will be oftener found to proceed from a secret principle of malice, than a just abhorrence of vice.

LETTER LXII.

TO MAXIMUS.

THE friendship I profess for you, induces me, not indeed to direct (for you are far above the want of a guide), but to remind you, however, of what you already know, and to admonish you carefully to observe and firmly to put it in practice: in other words, to know it to all the more useful purposes of knowledge. You will consider yourself as sent to that noble province, Achaia, the real and genuine Greece, where politeness, learning, and even agriculture itself, are supposed to have taken their first rise; as sent to govern a state composed of free cities; that is, to a society of men who breathe the spirit of true manhood and liberty, who maintained the rights they received from nature, by courage, by virtue, by alliances; in a word, by civil and religious faith. Revere the gods and heroes, their founders; the glory of their ancient days; and even that very antiquity itself; for age, as it is venerable in men, is in states sacred. Honour them, therefore, for their deeds of old renown; for those which true, and (I do not scruple to add) which fabulous history has recorded. Indulge them in the full exercise of their dignities, their privileges, and their very vanity. Remember, it was from this nation we derived our laws, that she did not receive ours by conquest, but gave us her own in consequence of our particular request. Remember, it is Athens that you approach; it is Lace-

dæmon you govern : and to deprive so renowned a people of the declining shadow, the remaining name of liberty, would be a hardship, would be even a barbarity of the severest kind. Physicians, you see, though with respect to diseases there is no difference between the free and the slave, yet treat persons of the former rank with more tenderness than those of the latter. Reflect on the illustrious figure these cities once made ; but so reflect, as not to despise them for what they now are. Far be pride and asperity from my friend ; nor fear by a proper condescension to lay yourself open to contempt. Can he who is vested with the power and bears the ensigns of authority, can *he* fail of meeting with respect, unless by pursuing base and sordid measures, and first breaking through that awful reverence he owes to himself ? Ill, believe me, is power proved by insult ; ill can terror command veneration : and far more efficacious is affection in obtaining one's purpose, than fear. For terror operates no longer than its object is present, but love produces its effects when the object is at a distance : and as absence changes the former into hatred, it raises the latter into respect. It behoves you, therefore (and I cannot repeat it too often), it behoves you well to consider the end of your office, and to represent to yourself how great and important is the administration of governing a free state. For, what is more becoming our social nature than well-regulated government, or more valuable than liberty ? How ignominious then must his conduct be, who turns the first into anarchy, and the last into slavery ? To these considerations let me

add, that you have an established reputation to maintain: and it is a maxim which your reading and conversation must have often suggested to you, that it is a far greater disgrace to lose the fame one has once attained, than never to have acquired it. I again beg you to be persuaded that I did not write this letter as presuming to instruct, but to remind you. Though, indeed, if I had, it would have only been in consequence of the great affection I bear you: a sentiment which I am in no apprehension of carrying beyond its just limits: for, there can be no danger of excess where one cannot love too well. Farewel.

LETTER LXIII.

TO CATO.

I GREATLY admire the generous grief you express for the death of Pompeius Quinctianus, as it is a proof that your affection for your departed friend does not terminate with his life. Far different from those who love, or rather, I should more properly say, who counterfeit love to none but the living. Nor indeed even *that* any longer than they are the favourites of fortune; for the unhappy are no more the object of their remembrance, than the dead. But *your* friendship is raised upon a more lasting foundation, and the constancy of your affection can only end with your life. Quinctianus, most certainly, well deserved to meet with that generous warmth from his friends, of which he was himself so bright an

example. He loved them in prosperity; protected them in adversity; lamented them in death. How open was his countenance! how modest his conversation! how equally did he temper gravity with gaiety! how fond was he of learning! how judicious his sentiments! how dutiful to a father of a very different character! and how happily did he reconcile filial piety to inflexible virtue, continuing a good son, without forfeiting the title of a good man! But why do I aggravate your affliction by reminding you of his merit? yet I know your affection for the memory of this excellent youth is so strong, that you had rather endure that pain, than suffer his virtues to be passed over in silence; especially by me, whose applause, you imagine, will adorn his actions, extend his fame, and restore him, as it were, to that life from which he is prematurely snatched. Farewel.

LETTER LXIV.

TO FUSCUS.

You desire to know in what manner I dispose of my time, in my summer villa at Tuscum? I rise just when I find myself in the humour, though generally with the sun; sometimes indeed sooner, but seldom later. When I am up, I continue to keep the shutters of my chamber windows closed; as darkness and silence wonderfully promote meditation. Thus free and abstracted from those outward objects which dissipate attention, I am left to my own thoughts; nor suffer my mind to

wander with my eyes, but keep my eyes in subjection to my mind : by these means they are not distracted with a multiplicity of external objects, and see nothing but what the imagination represents to them. If I have any composition upon my hands, this is the time I choose to consider it, not only with respect to the general plan, but even the style and expression, which I revise and correct as if I were actually writing. In this manner, I compose more or less as the subject is more or less difficult, and I find my memory able to retain it. I then call my secretary, and, opening the shutters, dictate to him what I have composed ; after which I dismiss him for a little while, and then call him in again. About ten or eleven of the clock (for I do not observe one fixed hour) according as the weather proves, I either walk upon my terrace, or in the covered portico ; and there I continue to meditate or dictate what remains upon the subject in which I happen to be engaged. From thence I get into my chariot, where I employ myself as before, when I was walking, or in my study ; and find this changing of the scene refreshes and enlivens my attention. At my return, I repose myself : then take a walk, and after that, repeat aloud some Greek or Latin oration, not so much for the sake of strengthening my voice as my digestion : though indeed the power of the voice at the same time is improved by this practice. I then walk again, am anointed, take my exercises, and go into the bath. At supper, if I have only my wife, or a few friends with me, some author is read to us ; and, after supper, we are entertained either with music, or an inter-

lude. When that is finished, I take my walk with my family, in the number of which I am not without some persons of literature. Thus we pass our evenings in various conversation; and the day, even when it is at the longest, steals imperceptibly away. Upon some occasions I change the order in certain of the articles above-mentioned. For instance, if I have studied longer, or walked more than usual; after my second sleep, and reading an oration or two aloud, instead of using my chariot, I get on horse-back; by which means I take as much exercise, and lose less time. The visits of my friends from the neighbouring villages claim some part of the day; and sometimes, by an agreeable interruption, they come in very seasonably to relieve me, when I am fatigued. I now and then amuse myself with sporting, but always take my tablets into the field, that if I should not meet with game, I may at least bring home something. Part of my time, too, is allotted to my tenants, though indeed not so much of it as they desire: and I return from settling their rustic controversies with a better relish to my studies and more elegant occupations. Farewel

LETTER LXV.

TO FUSCUS.

YOU are much pleased, I find, with the account I gave you in my former letter, of the manner in which I spend the summer season at Tuscum; and desire to know what alteration I make in my

method, when I am at Laurentinum in the winter? None, except abridging myself of my sleep at noon, and employing several hours both before day-light and after sun-set in study; but if any public business requires my early attendance at Rome (which in winter very frequently happens), instead of having interludes or music after supper, I meditate upon what I have previously dictated, and by often revising it in my own mind, fix it the more strongly in my memory. Thus I have given you a general sketch of my mode of life, both in summer and winter; to which you may add the intermediate seasons of spring and autumn: in these, as no part of the day is lost in sleep or dissipation, as in summer, so some time is gained for business or study by the nights being shorter than in winter. Farewel.

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